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COMMENTARY

THE ECONOMIC TEST FACING ISRAEL

A First-Hand Report

HAL LEHRMAN

TEL AVIV

A SHORT time ago an ex-minister in the Churchill wartime government divulged to a high official in the Ben Gurion wartime government his deep anxiety over the economic problems confronting the infant State of Israel. The high official reassured the friendly Englishman: "We Jews had a brief interruption of some two thousand years in our military career. Recently we had to start all over again, with pretty long odds against us. But I think we showed our proficiency as soldiers. On the other hand, for two thousand years we've been so apt at economics that people all over the world have been hiring us to solve their problems. . . . Isn't it reasonable to suppose that we shall now be able to solve our own?"

Such assured optimism is a useful antidote to the depression which must overtake any observer on first beholding Israel's economic dilemmas. Probably never before, either in Jewish or in universal history, has so much been attempted for so many with so little. Already, in the first year of its existence, this country has received one Jew for every three here on the day the state was proclaimed, and four times as many immigrants as returned from ancient Babylon. The treasury, depleted at the outset by British bookkeeping, has been drained close to the bottom by the drafts of war. The administration is entirely manned by officials who, whatever their competence, are for the first time in their lives grappling with the responsibilities of government. They have an inflation to control, an economy to revive, two empty thirds of their land to fructify—and a war still to conclude. Nevertheless, the doors of Israel remain wide open, and the declared policy of the state is to continue a flow of immigration which, if the same ratio to total existing population were applied, would mean no less than 37,800,000 immigrants into the United States annually.

Where are the resources to house these newcomers, give them work, transform them

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HAL LEHRMAN's balanced reports from Europe and the Middle East, both during the war and after, have gained him increasing recognition as an observer and analyst of present-day social, economic, and political change and conflict. His book *Russia's Europe* was published last year, and he has been overseas since last November gathering material for a new book on America's role in the revival of the West. This appraisal of the economic problems of Israel is the first of three articles he will contribute to this magazine from Tel Aviv. Readers will remember Mr. Lehrman's articles in COMMENTARY on Anglo-American diplomatic maneuvering preceding the establishment of the Jewish state. This is his second visit to Palestine. During the war he headed the OWI in Turkey. Mr. Lehrman was born in New York City in 1911; he was graduated from and has taught at Cornell University.

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from threadbare dependents into useful members of a going society? From whom are the funds to be obtained to water the wastelands of the Negev and colonize the conquered soil of Galilee? By what devices will industrialization for export, vital to an economy which will never be able to feed itself, be achieved against the resistance of inflated production charges and a spiraling cost of living? And, perhaps most important of all, what pattern of government will Israel follow in resolving its economic crisis?

The outside world may be little interested in what is done here—but it will surely be concerned with *how*. There is the model of the East European popular democracies, which began with pledging the freedom of enterprise and ended by stifling that freedom. There is the austere planning of Britain, and the elastic planning of the United States, and the deification of planning of the Soviet Union. The world will want to know how much of the ingredients of planning and liberty, of individualism and socialism, the makers of Israel will mix in their formula for economic solvency. By the nature of this mixture the world will sense in what direction Israel is turning in the larger field of ideology and a way of life.

IT MUST be said straightway that—although rationing and other controls were imposed almost simultaneously with the birth of the state, and a four-year absorption and development plan is already two months old, and a strict austerity plan has just been promulgated—natural laws are still working themselves out with small let or hindrance.

As top priority on its calendar, Israel has taken upon itself the staggering burden of gathering in as quickly as possible all of the Jews abroad who want and are able to come. Though Zion has become a reality, Zionism remains the prime and essential purpose of Israel's present leaders. The agonies of the decades under the mandate and the perils of the Arab war were not suffered merely to win a state and a flag, but to create a home. A home where Jews from all other places—young and old, rich and poor, quick or lame—may find a refuge and increase and multiply. The land must be speedily filled if it is to be made secure against its surrounding enemies. And who can tell when time will again run out? Therefore no effort must be spared to assemble the Jews of the Diaspora into sanctuary before the exits from abroad are sealed. Any limits on the flow of Jewry toward its hard-won refuge would be betrayal. This passionate emphasis on immigration, at no matter what strain on the resources of Israel, will remain bedrock policy unless and until the overstretched limits of the economy's absorptive capacity compel a revision.

The strain is proving enormous, on the immigrants as well as the country. The arrivals are pouring in currently at a rate of thirty thousand monthly—which means, in effect, that each month Israel would have to build an entire new city, complete with public services, schools, and all the rest, to absorb them properly. The truth is that lately they have hardly been absorbed at all. Of 160,000 persons "settled," more than 130,000 in the first immigrant onrush have been dispersed in makeshift fashion around the abandoned Arab districts, but these are now practically full up. Some twenty-four reception centers and transit camps—barrack and tent concentrations which, at least from the animal-comfort point of view, compare unfavorably with some of the DP purgatories in Germany—already have over fifty thousand inmates. At the beginning, residence in these camps was measured in days; now it is measured in months. Control procedures are wilting at both ends. Despite the network of Israeli immigration officials in chief Mediterranean ports, ships loaded with swarming hundreds occasionally drop anchor unauthorized and unannounced in Haifa harbor. A steady stream pours into camps whose personnel is valiant but short-staffed, inadequately trained, and increasingly barren of facilities to locate the jobs and the housing which will clear out one layer of immigrants and make room for the next.

Officials of the Jewish Agency, in charge of "immigrant absorption," privately admit

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that they have lost their grip on the situation: "We are like a small boat in a great flood." (Nevertheless, the Agency is resisting American Jewish institutional offers of experienced social workers, presumably because nobody would have time to give them the necessary instruction in local conditions —but one can also detect a fear of "foreign influences.") Sparse funds will prevent a public construction company called Amidar ("People's Housing") from living up to its name. Amidar reckons on building 16,000 immigrant housing units this year, 20,000 in 1950—but the minimum need just for 1949 is already estimated at 50,000 units. Four thousand prefabricated homes from Sweden, 10,000 tents with "kitchen and shower," ten houses to be erected daily by a fabulous new building-machine—all these and other plans are merely stopgaps for a patently mounting housing crisis.

Because of sheer weight of numbers, little vocational guidance or job placement services exist in the camps. Immigrants without relatives to whom they can go, wander out far afield on their own, hunting for work and permanent shelter in an unfamiliar country. They may find a job but no place to live, or a roof but no work. Occasional employment hitherto available in fruit groves near the camps is dwindling as the citrus season ends. Work on road repairs and as unskilled labor in the building field will not take up the slack. Unemployment has begun to hit even at non-immigrants, of whom at least six thousand are now jobless. This number will grow as the army demobilizes. Jobless veterans and new settlers are already marching in street demonstrations. Meanwhile, more and more immigrants are taking to sitting stolidly in their camps, eating at public expense, and gradually losing the hope which bore them to the Promised Land.

As for the older settlers, there is serenity only in the kibbutzim, whose members have plenty of troubles but divide up the worries along with the benefits of communal living. Also fairly contented is the rich tribe of bus, truck, and taxi drivers—and others who sell personal services. The expensive vacation resorts of Jerusalem and Tiberias are crowded with chauffeurs and laundrymen. For everyone else, the high cost of living is taking on nightmare dimensions.

At its root, the inflation is the old story of guns for butter. The Arab war shifted the national effort into non-productive channels. Expulsion from the sterling bloc, artificial credit expansion to pay for the war, restricted imports, emergency buying abroad at any cost, disrupted shipping, high insurance rates, reduction of manpower in the factories and on the land, shrinkage of export markets and hard foreign exchange, exhaustion of financial and consumer reserves, together with the inexorable growth of population—all these have dwarfed supply while magnifying demand. Purchasing power has mounted steadily; consumer outlets have steadily declined. The result is a crisis of scarcity. Nothing is abundant here except people and prices.

To the natural inflationary trend of a shortage market has been added the high cost of labor—begun when the British introduced the cost-plus system during World War II and neglected to restrain it by adequate taxation of excess profits. When pay rises meant bigger profits, wages went up. When wages went up, mechanization and efficiency failed to keep pace, but prices did. The only thing which went down was productivity.

This spiral, except for the hopeful 1945-46 interlude between wars, has continued. The average Israeli worker now earns about as much as the American, produces less than half as much, pays for the unbalance in prices which reduce his apparent high wage to a bare living allowance. In the case of the white-collar worker, the wage is mere subsistence. Rationing and price controls are half-hearted and with small effect. Roadblocks outside the main towns—"egg-blocks" —have failed to stop the black market. The press publishes admonitory notices that "Yehuda Buxenbaum was fined one hundred Israeli pounds for overcharging on cheese and butter, Zephorah Merimontchik fifteen

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pounds (or two weeks in jail) for selling poultry in her home without a license"—but housewives continue to outbid each other for whatever cheese, butter, or poultry they can get. American tourists have to draw heavily against their idealism while paying three-to-one on the dollar-pound exchange. When buying a small hotel room without bath, their dollar is worth about fifty cents; when buying shirts or shoes or coffee and cake, it is worth about thirty-five cents.

Tourists may permit themselves a cherished though costly look at the long-awaited Israel, then escape with limited financial loss and considerable spiritual satisfaction. But investors as a breed thrive less on things of the spirit than on figures along the black side of the ledger. The high costs of labor, fuel, electric power, and transport, the low level of mechanization, the Israeli pound's lopsided rate of exchange, all go into the making of a headache which many prospective foreign Jewish investors show themselves reluctant to chance for the sake of uncertain and slender profits. Corporations with sizeable foreign capital do get started here now and then, but the *Official Gazette* shows that the occasional companies now being founded rarely have a backing of more than thirty thousand dollars and usually do not go above three thousand dollars. At least seventy important investment projects, each with an average capital of better than a half-million dollars, have been conducting interminable surveys and inquiries—and postponing decision. Some useful missionary work is being done by the Palestine Economic Corporation and other foreign-sponsored investment societies. The big money has been simply staying away. The medium and little money, always a bit more eager, has been encountering the frustrations of a bureaucratic bottleneck on the desks of government officials who have not yet acquired the time or the strength to grapple with their daily chores. A consequence of this is that too many prospective investors give up in a huff. A good many more turn right around and go home at the first breath of something which is much more alarming to them than red tape and high costs: the suspicion that this country's economic destiny is being shaped by men with a bent toward socialism, communal enterprise, and similarly disconcerting ideologies.

Now there are two economic matters on which everybody in Israel, whatever his political bias, agrees. The first is that there must be controls. Under the best of circumstances, the vast immigration now under way would obviously unsettle the economy of the country for years to come. Add the drastically unfavorable trade balance, the abnormal price structure, the scarcity of machines and goods, and it is clear that only by resolute management and firm direction can equilibrium be attained. The stake of Israel in its bitterly-earned future is too high to risk waste and failure through lack of governmental intervention in the marketplace. Even an extreme right-wing regime, dedicated to rugged capitalism, would be compelled by the plain facts of the present dangers to deal roughly with the rights of uninhibited free enterprise.

The second point of general agreement is that Israel must have foreign investment capital if it is to meet the challenge hurled by its dizzily expanding population against its inadequate resources.

The simple truth, to begin with, is that no more than a quarter to a third of Israel's economy can be agricultural. This country must sell abroad in order to buy food; in the long run, it must "export or die." It must also export to get hard currency for imports which will force down the domestic price level through abundance of supply. To export, it must manufacture, which means machines, raw materials, factory installations—and money. Again, it needs industrialization—and money—to provide work for its overflow population. It needs money to irrigate the Negev and develop Israel's new territories, to build settlements and homes. It needs, according to sober official calculations, no less than two and a half billion dollars in the next four to seven years.

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Obviously, the Washington loan of one hundred million dollars—all of which will be applied to productive goods and machinery—is only a drop in the bucket. It will not be safe to count on many more such drops. Release of Israel's blocked sterling account in London will bring only minor relief. Gift capital, which has fought so much of Jewish Palestine's battle, has its limits too. Even by the most optimistic estimates of how much the United Jewish Appeal and other sources will contribute in the forthcoming seven years, there will still be a gap of at least one billion dollars which will have to come from private capital. Very little of this hole will be filled by the current crop of immigrants, whose general destitution contrasts pitifully with the relative opulence of the 1933-36 immigration after the advent of Hitler. Clearly, the bulk of the billion dollars will have to be collected from Jewish investors outside Israel, from Britain, Western Europe, South Africa, South America, Australia—and, most of all, from the United States.

MANY Israelis, a bit heady from their brave new freedom, have been complacently assuring this writer that the vast donations of American Jewry to Palestine were made for no other reason than calculated self-interest. Such analysts of American Jewish psychology—whose "knowledge" of conditions in America is a straight translation of conditions in pre-Nazi Germany—airily wave away as romantic the suggestion that the Jews of America may also have been spurred by a simple generosity, by the desire to build a haven for their persecuted overseas brethren rather than for themselves. Conversely, therefore, it is expected that American capital will flock to invest in Israel as an "insurance policy" and will gratefully go into business here, no matter how risky and unfavorable the terms, in order to have a refuge when the black wave of intolerance engulfs America too.

Fortunately for Israel's financial prospects, this curious (and subconsciously self-satisfied) view is not greatly shared by top-level leaders. These do feel that Jews abroad must continue to give their treasure as Jews in Israel have given their blood, to preserve this land for all Jews desiring to make it their home. That Jews in America accept this obligation will be demonstrated by their future contributions to the UJA. But the Israeli government also knows that there is a difference between philanthropy and investment. To be sure, sentiment will influence some hard-headed Jewish capitalists who otherwise would turn Israel down cold as a business risk—and a certain amount of "flight capital" will also settle here as a long-shot bet. But the dominant interest of prospective American investors will be in sound business, not in "insurance."

There is a lavish range of investment possibilities in this ingenious country, which already has produced everything from electrical transformers to toothbrushes, including Christmas-tree ornaments for export. Short of adopting a rigid Soviet system of state economy—without Russia's internal resources—this industry can only be developed with the help of Western capital. Even Mapam, the anti-government, Eastern-oriented party of Israel, merely abstained from voting on the American loan, instead of voting against it. Israel's very small Communist party did vote against the loan, but on "anti-imperialist" grounds only, simultaneously declaring for *private* Western capital! As for Mapai and other government coalition party chiefs, they know that the bulk of American Jewish investment capital, absolutely vital for Israel's stability, will demand that the proposition be sound and the terms attractive.

There is, then, general consent on the need for state planning and for encouragement of foreign capital. But nobody knows—not even inside the dominant Mapai councils—how much planning and how much encouragement. Will controls be limited to minimum regulation for attainment of a rationalized economy, with a generous place for individual initiative and private investment? Or will Mapai's dependence on a socialist-minded electorate lead it into making controls a good and an end in them-

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selves, with free enterprise badgered into a tight corner? Or is there even the possibility that planning, in the manner of Eastern Europe, will bend labor and capital alike to the doctrinaire tyrannies of a preconceived panacea?

CERTAIN sour critics of current affairs complain that the government has no planning or doctrine at all. They point to the lack of responsible economic experience in the administration. They charge that the bureaucracy has been unforgivably slow in moving against the inflation and woefully negligent in giving official attention to interested investors, who are here today but may be gone tomorrow. They warn that the new phase of crisis now besetting the country economically is every whit as hazardous as the old phase of military crisis and must be met with the same speed and resolution.

To this the government, with considerable justice, replies it is as much alive as anybody to the need for swift economic action. "The economic test which confronts us now," Premier Ben Gurion himself has said, "is no less grave than the test of war through which we have passed; on the contrary, it will be more prolonged and in many respects more difficult." And how can it be denied that the winning of the war was a full-time occupation? Friends of Menachem Beigin may continue to ask why the army had no boots or guns on the eve of the Arab assault, but the government rightly claims that the arms, the men, and the victory were produced under its direction. The same government, in the middle of a life-and-death struggle, also found time to foster an Aliya which, however imperfect its operation, has accomplished the incredible feat of increasing the Jewish population by one-third during a year of battle. Surely a government with such a record cannot legitimately be censured for not having simultaneously anticipated and solved a legion of economic difficulties. Let the critics, if they are sincere, allow a decent interval to elapse before clamoring for action from a government which has not had a moment of inaction since the hour of its birth.

Others are troubled, however, not by the regime's slowness to move, but by a likelihood of its moving in a wrong and disastrous direction. These see Israel's salvation in a dynamic, growing economy, but an economy which can only be maintained with Western help. The policy of continuous immigration creates a ready-made labor force and consumer market, which will stimulate both production and import. Such a healthy, expanding economy must have confident and large-scale foreign capital investment to nourish it.

But, it is feared, a fatal incompatibility exists between this road which Israel should travel and the contrary economic ideas and institutions which encumber the road. In short, according to the argument, the foreign aid which Israel must have to survive will be repulsed, not attracted, by the prejudices and theories of the men who direct Israel's decisions.

Those who hold to this dark view point out in the first place that Mapai, which controls nine of the sixteen portfolios in the cabinet, is and has always been a dedicated socialist party. Life-long habits of thought cannot be shed overnight. In Mapai's election platform and in campaign speeches, the motif of the appeal was socialism—and socialism continues to be the promise of every major Mapai declaration. Ben Gurion in recent statements has stressed the immediate necessity of foreign capital, but he has never failed to link this with a reiterated testimonial to the bliss of a socialist future. And the future will not be too long delayed: "We may hope the day will come when a socialist state will be built in Israel *in our generation.*"

This bias toward the abstract virtues of a workers' society is admittedly a tendency rather than a policy. But, say the advocates of free economy, there is nothing hypothetical about the Histadrut (General Federation of Jewish Labor), that strange, many-headed economic colossus the like of which exists nowhere in the world save Israel: an institution which is, at one and the same time, trade union, cooperative, collective, employer, trust—and government.

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As LABOR organization, Histadrut unquestionably is stronger than any trade union in any other free country. Its membership embraces around ninety per cent of all organized labor in Israel. It operates the nation's labor exchanges—the *official* employment bureaus which dominate the labor market. It has the power to decide whether a worker may transfer himself from one locality or employment to another, and can usually block his re-employment or secure his dismissal if he disagrees. In practice, its authority amounts to a virtually closed shop throughout Israel's entire industrial economy.

But Histadrut is not only an organizer of labor. It is also an employer of labor. Quite apart from its commanding position in Israeli agriculture through its hold on the communal and collective settlements, Histadrut is in business on its own as manufacturer, builder, importer, transporter, distributor, and shopkeeper. It is the outright owner of factories, warehouses, and other facilities in numerous key industries, several of which it dominates. In some enterprises it is actually a partner of private capital. Occasionally it has been able to buy joint ownership in certain establishments shortly after strikes there. Altogether, Histadrut has a direct owner-manager stake in about twenty per cent of Israel's commerce, trade, and industry.

Thus, in relation to labor Histadrut is a payer of wages and a collector of union dues; in relation to capital it is a sharer in management and profits as well as a representative of the workers. It wields the double-edged sword of ordering or forbidding strikes, asking for wage increases or denying them. All these paradoxes give Histadrut a unique position vis-à-vis the bargaining rights of the employe and the independence of the employer. The potentialities for good or evil in such a situation are rather obvious.

Furthermore, in addition to worker and owner the consumer also falls in line as a dependent on Histadrut for various essential services. Tnuva, the Histadrut cooperative which markets seventy per cent of Israeli mixed farming's total production, is a sufficient case in point; according to its own paid advertisements, Tnuva "unites two hundred and fifty agricultural settlements and many hundreds of individual farms; sells fresh milk, butter, soft and hard cheese, processed cheese; markets at its stores in the cities and towns of Israel vegetables, potatoes, fruits, eggs, poultry, fish, honey, jams, preserved foods, citrus and fruit juices, cauliflower, custards, flowers, and saplings. . . ."

IT IS not merely the sheer size of Histadrut which compels friends of private enterprise to stay up nights worrying about the future of individual initiative in this country. More ominous, they say, is the fact that Histadrut is so closely intermixed with government as to be practically identical with it. Premier Ben Gurion rose to his present eminence from leadership of the Histadrut. So did seven of Israel's twelve cabinet ministers. The entire civil service is shot through with Histadrutniks, especially in the important jobs. Mapai, which has the largest delegation in Parliament, is cut wholly from Histadrut cloth. The significance of these ramifications far exceeds the simple loyalties of what, with allowance for labor's irreligion, might be called the old *shul* tie. The men who run the government, parliament, and administration, it is said, are *still* part and parcel of the Histadrut which they made and which, in turn, made them.

How, it is asked, can a government of such origins be expected to give equal consideration to capital as against labor, to private enterprise as against socialized enterprise? Even if Ben Gurion and his more temperate colleagues wanted to, they would be dissuaded by the certainty that the Marxist Mapam, strongest opposition party both in parliament and in Histadrut, would rally the workers by howls of "betrayal." At any rate, whether out of deep-rooted inclination or out of fear of radical backbiting, the government is allegedly favoring Histadrut all down the line. With imports necessarily restricted because of the foreign exchange shortage, Hamashbir Hamerkazi, the Histadrut trading cooperative, gets the preference on import licenses while private industrialists go whis-

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tling for raw materials and machinery. When public-works contracts are being handed out, Solel Boneh, the Histadrut building cooperative, gets most of the business. When a foreign investor expresses interest in any field where a Histadrut outfit operates, he is subtly made to understand that his existence will be easy if he "associates" himself with the Histadrut firm, difficult or impossible if he does not. Although nobody will admit it officially, there is a discernible tendency in general to cold-shoulder the small investor, whose entry in large numbers might inconveniently swell the "capitalist front." Investors have been repeatedly assured that laws will soon be promulgated granting them facilities in customs-free import of industrial equipment, in exports of profits, and in easy taxes—but the laws take a long time to write. As for removing the biggest single deterrent to investment—the high cost of production—the government incessantly talks about breaking the inflationary spiral, but does nothing to reduce wages, the high level of which is the main source of the trouble.

THE case outlined above, however, is not the whole story. A survey of the arguments to the contrary may help to relieve the fairly heavy anxiety which has so far been apparent in this report.

Let us look again at Histadrut. That an institution is potentially capable of abusing its power does not mean that such power is automatically evil. Close inspection shows that, on the whole, Histadrut has in fact done an enormous amount of good. If we consider the specific interests of labor, we find that workers in Histadrut-owned enterprises generally enjoy higher pay and better conditions than in private enterprises. If we consider capital's interests, we find that Histadrut's role as capitalist has kept its trade union demands moderate and made it markedly tolerant of the employer's side in labor disputes. Toward the consumer, Histadrut has fulfilled its obligation of delivering goods and services as abundantly as supply permitted, with only rare price-gouging—which is more than can be said for many private entrepreneurs. And for the national welfare at large, Histadrut has been infinitely more than a top-heavy combination of labor movement, cooperative, and manufacturers' association. It has been pioneer, colonizer, and builder. If the land of Israel today has depth and breadth and structure, with a Westernized economy which can by proper methods be strengthened to accommodate a dynamic society, it is to Histadrut that a large part of the credit must go.

This Zionist quality in Histadrut is its greatest promise, as it has been its greatest contribution. When Zion was a wilderness, Histadrut took the main risks where private capital faltered. When Israel was ringed round with guns, Histadrut sent its confident workers out to build factories for the uncertain future under Arab fire. Today, Histadrut stands in the vanguard of the drive to absorb the immigration—giving easy terms and taking long risks in loans to new kibbutzim; extending financial first-aid to villages reclaimed from the vanished Arabs; supporting new industries which will make work for immigrants; hiring immigrants to help in repairing or building the homes which will house them. If its critics charge that Histadrut can play such a large role because of its overgrown dimensions and governmental preference, its friends reply that Histadrut achieved such dimensions through decades of unflagging, productive toil and that it gets government contracts because it alone has the equipment, experience, and skill necessary for filling them. During the war even the British Army, no friend of Zionism or of Jewish labor, was compelled to give its military construction work to Solel Boneh because no private contractor or combination of contractors could do the job as well.

Histadrut, its advocates go on to say, is hardly likely to push all-out toward socialism —for the simple reason that it is not a labor organization at all, but rather a conglomeration of divergent interests, economic and political. A significant part of its membership, especially in the cooperative, is thoroughly middle class, with a bourgeois mentality which has already caused fundamental dif-

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ferences with the representatives of labor in high Histadrut councils. Politically, Histadrut is by no means the exclusive property of any one party, its executive being composed of four divergent parties, including the General Zionist and religious workers, and its policies being constantly aired for inspection at periodic and democratic elections.

But the soundest guarantee of all against a breakneck Histadrut plunge toward leftist absolutism is its Zionist conscience. The knowledge that Israel cannot flourish without private and foreign capital will shape Histadrut conduct considerably more than ideology, at least during the immediately foreseeable future. Histadrut leaders have told me with a grin: "You know, a labor state wouldn't be so bad, but right now Israel needs friendly capital—and Israel, not philosophy, is what we live for."

As nearly as can be made out from the cloud of partisan argument, neither Histadrut nor the present government is plotting any sudden surprises for free enterprise. The specter of nationalization is not stalking at the moment. Posts and telegraphs, telephones, ports, railways, and the like are in the hands of the state, but were simply taken over from the mandatory without change of status. Water and natural resources (including oil, if it is ever discovered) will be regarded as national property, and it is possible that industrial land also may one day be nationalized as a limited and vital commodity which Israel cannot permit to become an item for speculators. No other nationalization is contemplated. Israel's economy will go on being a novel mixture of public and private initiative. In essential services such as transport, where cooperatives are unshakably entrenched, and in agriculture, where little private capital is likely to venture because of poor profit prospects, collective effort will continue to predominate. In industry, where individual initiative has contributed most and is now most needed, private capital will remain the leader. The pattern of the economy will be eclectic and experimental, as always, preserving the best of the older forms but searching at the same time for new ones which can meet a new state's problems.

Political convulsions apart, there is no reason why collective and private enterprise cannot exist amicably side by side here for a long time to come. In our agitated era, nobody can prudently predict what is going to happen in Israel or elsewhere twenty or thirty years from now. Obviously, anything can happen, including famine and revolution. But, as far as one may count on probabilities, socialism in Israel can be written off for at least the next decade or so. During that period, investment should be about as safe here as anywhere.

Fewer investors would be scared away if Ben Gurion and his colleagues talked less volubly about their socialist "dreams," but it is fairly evident that the talk is for Mapai's electorate and not indicative of immediate policy. Ben Gurion's basic strategy, in fact, is to postpone the ideological and other fundamental decisions of the state until a remote date when Israel can afford to make them. In the meantime he wants to draw in the funds which will create work and shelter for a nation which is now multiplying faster than anything since Old Testament days.

His program for a partnership of capitalism and collectivism is facilitated by the mental climate here. Jewish Palestine has never known any really bitter strife between capital and labor. This country skipped the feudalism—social, agricultural, or industrial—which envenomed relations in other lands. Jewish worker and Jewish employer in Palestine have lived and let live. Even now, despite the advance in other countries of what goes by the name of "socialism," the Jewish worker here is considerably more impressed by homely things like a good standard of living than by pie-in-the-sky utopias. He will welcome, rather than resist, an increase in private enterprise, with its promise of greater production and the more abundant life.

Only one development is sure to magnify the role of collectivism in Israel's economy

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failure of private capital to fill the emptiness now awaiting its arrival. In that disastrous case, there will be no other choice for the state but to move into the void.

THERE remains the unanswerable question of the amount of leeway which private enterprise will be permitted if ever the immediate crisis of high prices and low supply is surmounted. For the moment, the leeway will be understandably narrow. While this article is being written, the government has announced the first phase of its program to solve the cost-of-living dilemma. The keynotes are austerity and control, on the British model. Dov (Bernard) Joseph, whose dexterous management and even-handed rationing as administrator of Jerusalem kept that beleaguered city tranquil and heroic under siege, is prescribing a regimen which imposes a "standard" diet, "utility" clothing and furniture, banning of luxury production except for export, banning of imports except for essentials, surtaxing of semi-luxuries to subsidize basic commodities, stringent regulation of prices, sales, and profits. Control will be achieved by severe licensing, centralization of importers, distributors, wholesalers, and retailers in limited societies whose membership will be selected by the government, and allocation of production quotas to existing plants, the entire process to be fortified by a small army of clerks and inspectors. Hopefully, it is expected that control will also be facilitated by the cooperation of a civic-minded people.

Some of the wise money is betting that a program which depends on general acceptance of onerous control will never succeed with a people that has spent its entire history fighting infringements of individual liberty. This view does not take into account such impressive performances as the conduct of Jerusalem under fire, and it is certainly too early to dismiss the austerity campaign as visionary. It is also premature to pronounce the control plan unworkable, though the conservative opposition has already begun roaring that the system creates a monstrously expensive bureaucracy, increases unemployment, swells the consumer's purchasing power while curtailing the supply of things he can buy, dictates a reduction in retail prices before reducing production and distribution costs, and totally ignores the politically inconvenient matter of lowering the wage level, which is at the bottom of the whole inflationary muddle. The government is entitled to the benefit of the doubt. Profits of importer, manufacturer, and middleman have been generally excessive until now. The margin can safely be shrunk without hardship or injustice. Until there is clear evidence to the contrary, it must be assumed that the government will also move against wages as soon as reduction of other elements in the cost of living has made the move feasible.

BUT the wage cut will have to come. Otherwise, production costs cannot sink enough to attract the capital investment which alone can absorb immigration. Nor will sufficient venture capital arrive unless the government finds some formula to keep the controls from tying prospective investors hand and foot, a condition which commerce and industry here are already glumly contemplating. Free enterprise, not unnaturally, is asking for a fair amount of freedom. It is calling for political courage from the government and not for mere declarations of devotion to individual initiative. The campaign against the cost of living is well and good, but how reconcile its restrictions with the expansion of industry and the acquisition of foreign investment which the government repeatedly professes to be its purpose without revealing any positive plans to attain it? Capital's attitude is very much like that of the young lady who, on leaving for vacation and hearing her mother's advice to be a good girl and have a good time, replied: "Make up your mind, Mother."

Political courage is not all that is required. The vastness of Israel's needs, and the feebleness of its native resources, would make the problem of economic solvency staggeringly difficult even if politics' ugly head were permanently sunk in the Negev sands. It is easy, for instance, to say: "Brit-

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ain succeeded with austerity—why can't we?" But the British had a limited and fully employed labor force which could be assigned to posts of greatest usefulness; Israel has a growing unemployment crisis and an increasing mass of immigrants whose condition of living is already, to put it mildly, sufficiently austere. Britain had a disciplined, highly trained corps of civil servants; Israel's civil service has scarcely commenced its growing pains, and its personnel, motivated by natural human frailty, are still less concerned with learning their duties than with jockeying for position and making themselves "indispensable." And one of the prime commodities which Israel has lacked is time. Just as the tourists came too soon, before the hotels were built, the mine-pitted roads repaired, and the plumbing installed, so the capitalists were invited too early, before Israel's investment house could possibly be furnished for their reception.

SOLUTION of the problems which beset the Planning and Coordination Department, newly established in the Prime Minister's office to battle the economic crisis, will need more than the dynamism so brilliantly displayed by Ben Gurion and his colleagues in the winning of the war. Happily, they are fully and soberly aware of this.

Among the Jews of Israel, moreover, whatever their political views or complaints against the government's economic policy, I have met nobody who is not sure that somehow the new test will be met and passed. Over and above the conflicting remedies which are being proposed for salvation, there is in this land a universal subscription to the economic theory of miracles, or the divine doctrine of *nissim*. Considerable evidence to support this doctrine's efficacy exists in recent history. The annals of Jewish Palestine have certainly known blacker moments, but each has brightened into triumph. What prospects were there two years ago for statehood against the diplomatic manipulations of most of the world, or a brief year ago for survival against the expected onrush of forty million Arabs? It has been well said that in Palestine "miracles are a natural phenomenon." Israel still retains the secret weapon —classified as "A.B."—which beat back crushing odds in an apparently hopeless war. That weapon is "Ain Brera"—"No Alternative."

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YOUNG AMERICA TAKES OVER THE COLLEGES

The Two Worlds of the School

ARNOLD W. GREEN

THE commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Youth Month (September 1948) depicts a well-dressed boy and girl, striding forward, with school books clutched under their arms. It neatly symbolizes a major article of the American creed: American Youth, through Education, is the Hope of the World.

The United States has developed an accent on youth which has no parallel in modern Western nations. A United States Department of Labor Bulletin on family expenditures in Chicago has shown that in families with three children of whom one at least is under sixteen years of age, the clothing expenditures for the children exceed those for husband and wife combined in all income groups up to $7,500 a year. Voluntary donations for research and treatment connected with infantile paralysis, it is well known, are entirely disproportionate to the actual incidence of the disease and its mortality rate, compared, let us say, with cancer, that efficient killer of the adult. Our mass media of art and enlightenment—movies, radio, television, etc.—are designed for youth. Our advertising is addressed to ever younger consumers, today more and more the controllers of the family budget. And even the advertising addressed to the adult is often designed to awake uneasiness concerning his children's regard: "Your *son* will be proud of you if you drive this car." But over and above these considerations, there is the affirmation of youth as the protected and cherished period of life. One of the more querulous objections to conscription was that our American youth would lose out on the golden years, the years of carefree enjoyment, dalliance, and irresponsibility—roughly from sixteen to twenty-four.

This emphasis on the young was not characteristic of America before the Civil War. The shift accompanied an increase in the rate of social change: as change became ever more rapid, the middle-aging found themselves less and less able to understand and attune themselves to new gadgets, new codes of proper social and moral conduct. Parents inevitably attempted to cling to and inculcate the ways of living they had accepted during their own adolescence, and since parents in any community represented different age-groups among themselves, the demands which some parents made of their children proved inconsistent with those made by other parents. Almost every child could point to other parents who were more liberal with *their* children. The result was increased conflict in the home, a growing sense of helplessness in dealing with the new generation, and, finally, an uneasy acceptance of standards that the children had picked up outside the home.

AMERICANS have in recent years added to the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness the right of every boy and girl to a college education. But, asks ARNOLD W. GREEN here, what kind of education is being encouraged on the thousand campuses of America? In an effort to answer the question he turns an eye on the educational ideals currently held by parents, educators, and, not least of all, by Young America itself, which would seem, according to his evidence, to be holding the whip hand in the process. Mr. Green is an assistant professor of sociology at the American University in Washington. He has taught at the University of New Hampshire, Pennsylvania State College, and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. His article "Why Americans Feel Insecure" appeared in COMMENTARY in July 1948, and his book on Henry C. Carey will shortly be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press. He was born in Newmarket, New Hampshire, in 1914.

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OTHER factors contributed to this result. It has been estimated that only 43.5 per cent of today's population are the descendants of colonial forebears, and this, together with the high rate of intermarriage with more recent arrivals, has made Americans, in a broad sense, a second-generation people. This means an accentuation of the split between the immigrant generation and its youth, already widened by the accelerating rate of social change. Only the second generation really belong, really understand, are ready to move in all areas of American life with assurance and ease. To be sure, the children in most modern American families are not literally "second generation," but since it takes the passage of several generations to eliminate cultural differences between parents and children stemming from immigration, the feeling of inequality remains for some time. Certainly hundreds of thousands of families during the present century experienced, in some degree, a reversal of role, the children interpreting proper modes of conduct to their *parents*.

Above all, there is the family's devotion to individual success, the real essence of the American Dream, which has survived in ideology long after the economy ceased to expand at the late 19th-century rate. Most elders retained faith in this vision by transmitting to their offspring their personally unfulfilled hopes. An unprecedented standard of living afforded the majority of families sizable means for making this kind of investment in the future, and permitted the development of child-guidance clinics and child experts, who talk confidently of the "age of the child," "the child-centered home," and "the shift from the authoritarian to the democratic family"—this last meaning that children are to be consulted on all matters that affect them.

Nevertheless, it is extremely important to note that actually we have *not* developed anything new that will serve to link modern youth with the adult world. We have no usable substitutes for that family-centered economy (most clearly developed on the frontier) in which children and adolescents had a set of duties and responsibilities which were direct training for adult roles. Objectively speaking, all we have today is a type of tolerated parasitism. Parents now face an isolated youth group which has renounced personal obligation and responsibility to them, while the parents themselves have come to accept the adolescent's autonomy in a social world separate from their own, and have adopted a philosophy of sacrifice for a future embodied in their children. It is on this foundation that we have erected the structure of the modern school.

IN 1940, of almost thirty million of the country's population in the ages between five and seventeen, twenty-five and a half million attended school. The vast majority of American youth now complete high school education.

And, if present trends continue, a college degree also will at some time in the future become the normal expectation for the majority of American youth. The population of the United States has multiplied approximately three and a half times between 1870 and 1948, but college enrollments have multiplied over forty times, rising from sixty thousand to almost two and a half million. President Truman's Commission on Higher Education has advocated a further doubling of college enrollments in the next twelve years.

Despite the claims of professional educators, this revolution in the school has had little to do with education as traditionally conceived. There are two major reasons why more youngsters are now in school than ever before.

First, the sheer fact that we have little place for them anywhere else. A remarkable correlation can be drawn between the rate of unemployment in the depression and the laws passed by states raising the age up to which public education was compulsory.

Second, higher education offers the hope of jostling ahead in the general melee bearing the name free competition. The catalogues put out by the smaller institutions

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promise to train lower- and lower-middle class youth to become teachers, salesmen, dietitians, nurses. The publicity of the larger institutions, more unobtrusively, sees to it that the median yearly earnings of graduates receive public notice. It *pays* to get an education.

So much have vocational policies designed to foster material and social success come to dominate the thinking of all concerned with the school, that the schools for the liberal arts even feel themselves forced to rationalize courses in literature and philosophy as ultimate, if not immediately recognized, aids in earning more money. I once heard a rather pathetic old Greek professor pleading with a faculty committee to retain his courses in the catalogue; he claimed on the basis of his figures that professional men who had studied the language earned higher salaries than those who had not. The school stammers this type of instrumental excuse for its own existence in the face of the sullen and antipathetic, yet essentially logical, resistance to learning on the part of its young charges. If it is success that is the goal, they have their own realistic ideas as to what they feel is needed to win the larger cash prizes in today's world.

The graduate students and younger academicians, men who are for the most part incurably intellectual because of their temperaments if nothing more, live in a state of guilt over their genuine interests. They feel constrained to discuss the strategy of football with what they pray will be regarded as easy familiarity, and to discuss their life work, their real interest, with scatological epithets. Some European observers have imputed our contempt for intellectuality to the American male's fear that he will be suspected of being a homosexual, and there may be something in it, but there are simpler and more obvious explanations.

In general, America is a nation of lower- and middle-class people. A landed aristocracy may not actually produce art and literature, but this class has done more than any other, in history, to support their appreciation and diffusion. America's incipient landed aristocracy of the pre-Revolutionary period disappeared at the turn of the 19th century, along with primogeniture and entail. Whatever stability of form and style may have been retained and renewed along the Atlantic seaboard, it was the ever new and ever to be conquered Western frontier that placed its stamp upon the American ethos. Its drink: raw whiskey; its religion: the demoniac frenzy of the camp-meeting; its drive: greed and conquest and physical action, held in check not by spiritual and ethical principles so much as by the sheer organizational requirement of loyalty to family and locality. The way was cleared for exploitation and commercialization, for the public-be-damned entrepreneur, for the specific middle-class value orientation which was and still is dominant for all social classes in this country—that all-pervasive ideal which makes individual success and collective progress virtually synonymous.

The development of attitudes in the American school faithfully reflected the changes taking place outside the classroom. It is no accident that the specifically American contribution to philosophy is pragmatism: pure instrumentalism in an externalized universe of impermanent materials.* It is likewise no accident that our outlook stresses, not creativity, not contemplation, not the building of wisdom and inner resources, but "adjustment." And not adjustment to the world as perceived by the human personality, but as independently given. In its most popular form, our outlook demands conformity to herd standards so that earning capacity will not be impaired. Squarely within this latter perspective is the report of President Truman's Commission on Higher Education. Speaking of the need to implement group democratic values, the only specific goals it urges are more buildings and more students, both rationalized by projecting into the fu-

* The objection that this is not what either William James or John Dewey meant by pragmatism may be theoretically well taken. But who can deny that this is what pragmatism has become, in the hands of their disciples, and institutionally in present-day education?

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ture a hazardous estimate of the number of people who will find white-collar jobs.

The very expansion of school facilities, however "democratic" this may have been in conception and execution, has further intensified the instrumental and anti-intellectual trend in the school, and most particularly in the college. Before the First World War, our relatively small college population was made up of upper-class and upper-middle-class males with some rudiments of a cultured background, seeking either to embellish a secure social position, or preparing for a profession of high prestige, with reasonable assurance of achieving that goal. But since the First World War, a swelling tide of first-generation collegians has deluged the campus. These students, by and large, are not interested in the content of the education that will lead to the degree, but only in what they hope the degree can be used for, with, however, little of the assurance of the previous college generation that it will really guarantee success. Add to this the fact that there is little intrinsic connection between college work and their own immediate problems as they see them—a good time, social prestige, a mate, a job—and their boredom and insecurity become understandable.

THE present crisis in higher education, about which so much has been said and proposed, seems to me to come down to one root fact: the dogged determination of a constantly increasing proportion of students to resist the tasks imposed by an educational system which is itself unsure about what ends it is pursuing. It is not that there are too many or too few youngsters in school (or that there are too few schools, or too few teachers), or even that entrance standards are so low that too many without sufficient preparation are admitted, but that too many candidates are admitted—indeed, forced to attend—whose values oppose the avowed basic purposes of the school.

The school puts up no opposition to the ideal of education as the promotion of individual success which is demanded by both parent and child. All are equally agreed on the inculcation of democratic-patriotic loyalties. It is a third purpose that is the focus of unorganized, and certainly for the most part tacit, opposition. The school has functioned historically as the formal agency transmitting the classical-cultural heritage to succeeding generations of the young. And it is here that the school, itself increasingly uncertain of the extent to which that heritage should be transmitted, finds itself on the defensive, fighting a kind of inarticulate rear-guard action.

We might ask why, in an anti-intellectual period, the school puts up as much opposition as it does. One answer is that an epoch which values technology over science and the glib wisecrack over the painstaking observation still gives a secondary, if somewhat grudging and sullen, respect to what are referred to as "the better things of life." While only professional educators and upper-middle-class women are supposed to give these better things very much attention, the intellectual *parvenu* is determined not to be left out. The urge to acquire a mere smattering of culture is rather widespread, if for no other reason than to have sufficient acquaintance with it to put it in its proper place. In a recent college movie, a blonde shook her hips about for a while, then, with a knowing leer, went into her song number—"Willie the Shake"—in front of a bust of Shakespeare. Had more of the audience been denied forced acquaintanceship with Shakespeare, they would have been denied the smug self-satisfaction of their laughter. They must have their cultural cake, too, if only to spit on it.

Of course parent and child agree that these "better things of life" are not to demand too much time and energy; they must not interfere with the child's good time now, or with his preparation for the success race in the future. Also, these better things can be used in attaining real goals: there is still sufficient prestige attached to the liberal arts so that many youngsters will take that extra year of French instead of Merchandising Methods 64, and get an AB rather than its foster-cousin, the BBA degree. But since it is the label, and only the label, that is im-

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portant (no future job associate is going to start a conversation on religious symbolism in the Middle Ages), there remains the reasonable insistence that the *process* of acquiring the label be made constantly easier.

THE school feels and must react to this pressure. No longer serving a secure social class, it must meet at some point of compromise the new unruly group of those on their way. It cannot surrender at once its traditional reason for existence, it isn't even being asked to do that, and it is not developing anything to take the place of tradition. It retreats over familiar ground.

First in the high school, the football coach, the shop instructor, and the "domestic science" teacher are allocated higher salaries than the Latin teacher; then, Latin is withdrawn. Students are allowed to substitute a course called "The World of Science" for the no longer mandatory geometry. And, no longer required to take the old European history course, they may now in open discussion freely exchange mutual demonstrations of ignorance in something called "Modern Problems of Citizenship"—the teacher having initially assured them that in a democracy everyone has the right to express his own opinion.

What we have is opportunistic retreat, and not a carefully planned advance toward frankly labeled vocational training *plus* what has come to be known as general education. This new curriculum rather takes over by default as traditional education is attacked—as a discipline, not as prestige-symbol—by the new student population. The crisis in modern education does not result from the weakening of the classical-cultural curriculum; rather, the crisis results from the school's inability to decide what it is going to do with it, how far it will be modified, what exactly is to take its place as it recedes. On the other hand, parent and child could effectively reduce the dilemma by concertedly and frankly demanding outright vocational training, plus techniques for better adjustment to the social world of the school: ballroom dancing, football, party etiquette, how to get bids from fraternities, and so on. But parent and child are of even more divided purpose than the school; they continue to "want an education" as much for its prestige value as for its vocational usefulness.

And yet, the older of the two worlds of the school, the world of class-room, lectures, books, assignments, and examinations, however blunderingly and with whatever increasing lack of confidence in its unique contribution, still remains charged with perpetuating a sense of history in a present that has forsaken the past, and which views the future only as a bigger and more flattering reflection of itself. The fault of the old education, and it was grievous, was its subordination of knowledge and vision to the perpetuation of an elite, not of intellectual attainment, but of social position. Yet the value of the search for knowledge and vision went unquestioned as a desirable thing in itself. The sin of the new education is not that it has lost its role as guarantor and safeguard of established social position, but that it hawks a pinchbeck product while blandly assuring its students that they are receiving for their money an education in the old sense, plus preparation for a job, both at the reduced price of a minimum of effort. There are, of course, other, more popularly accepted reasons for current administrative fashions, such as: "We are not teaching subjects, but students," and: "We must not forget that Vital Living, not mere passing courses, is our educational goal." But the new education is not new *education;* the Vital Living looks only too often like the same old course rendered anemic by cutting down the number of assignments.

AT THE same time, another world of the school has grown up, a world that professional educators try to ignore and that worries the deans of women as they receive, by indirection, some knowledge of its code. A world two parts self-indulgence and one part rebellion, it sets itself up as a rival educational system—even more, it invades, usurps, and dominates the official world of the school.

The self-indulgence of this other world is expressed in the exaggeration of the general

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desire to live one's own life, to develop one's own personality, to have a good time. The rebellion stems from the combination of accent on youth and the fact that youth has no secure place outside its own isolated age-group. Economically dependent upon his parents at a time of mental and physical, if not intellectual and emotional, maturity, the frustrated adolescent directs his energy toward self-expression, as it has come to be called. But this is not limited to his somewhat humiliating demands for further use of the family automobile, more and better clothes, more spending money, all of which heighten his sense of dependence and frustration. For release and escape from the intractability of the adult world, the adolescent, of either high school or college age, has available an exciting arena of competition with his peers, a tinsel and fantasy world which is at the same time real and immediate and tangible: the world of dates and dances, of football games and beach parties, of moonlit nights and fraternity pledging.

The extreme type of this kind of school society is reached in our large co-educational state universities, located in small towns where the only reason for the existence of the community is the school itself. Here students live together, away from home, date, eat, organize cliques, go to movies and athletic contests, free from any contact with home and community. Here the unique values of the American campus reach their apogee, for the student body is drawn from more or less the same social range, and the divisive force of social differences stemming from off the campus is reduced to a minimum. The state campus way of life is the archetype—only slightly modified elsewhere.

This world of the school is universally organized against the other and older world. A gag places one as a sharp character, but a few lines of English verse can only earn one the reputation of being a "drip"; it is suspected, and usually with some justification, that this outlandish interest serves as mere compensation for failure to measure up to campus standards. Making a grade is something different, for flunking out is a recognized catastrophe, and it is known that prospective employers sometimes give grades consideration. A socially acceptable student may even score consistently high grades with social impunity, provided he insists that he never opens a book.

There is no great secrecy about this indifference to the formal purposes of the school. Student informants are unabashedly open about their real feelings toward "this stuff," demand extensions of vacations, reduce their personal relationships with instructors to questions over what should be the irreducible minimum of study necessary to satisfy an assignment, and plead for a textbook so they won't have to go all the way over to the library to read.

ABOUT this real world of the campus, a replica of the high school's, with a few embellishments, the first thing to note is that it is highly regimented and compulsive. Fashions in dress may and do shift radically from one year to the next, but while they prevail they are uniforms. There are fashions in carrying books that mark one as being in the know. Speech patterns are also highly stylized, and one must be responsive to all their unstated nuances. (Thus: to characterize a girl as both "smooth" and "sharp" violates only literal description.)

The high school or college campus systematically grades its members in terms of certain definite criteria. First, and most important of all, the degree of physical attractiveness. Next, conformity to campus standards of dress, manners, speech. To "rate," one must be popular with the opposite sex, and be able to dance well. If a boy, one should have access to an automobile and a considerable supply of spending money. Those who "rate" belong to a high-prestige fraternity, sorority, or club; they must participate in student activities, which themselves are graded in order of value—the most important being athletic, next, such matters as dance committees, school theatricals, and so on, and, a poor third, those organizations and affairs that have some connection with the other world of the school, such as scholarship

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societies, science, radio, and stamp-collecting clubs.

There is something more, no less real for being more difficult to state precisely, and that is the reputation for being a "good joe," a term of esteem applied to girls as well as to boys. A good joe will lend you money and listen to your troubles, will graciously introduce you to a member of the opposite sex, will never let you down either within or outside your clique. The good joe preserves an equable temper and is not, as are the grinds, openly competing for a high course grade.

But physical attractiveness alone serves as a virtually infallible index to success in all lines of social competition. The gratifying sense of being physically attractive grants the initial assurance that enables fortunate youngsters to acquire easily the other marks of prestige: ability to dance well, date, a secure knowledge of clique lingo, an air of "sophistication." The importance of this factor is of course not limited to the school: in a country with relatively little social-class differentiation, personal appearance has taken first place. And even in those schools with a considerable diversity of social-class background, physical attractiveness assumes major importance, though social life after graduation will make the consideration of class background of equal if not primary importance.

If physical attractiveness is the primary criterion of competitive success, the primary activity is dating. As the late Willard Waller pointed out, dating is not true courtship, for it is not recognized as preliminary to marriage; dating is "aim-inhibited courtship." It is the supreme activity in the world of the student, and may go far in explaining the apolitical orientation of the modern American undergraduate. Perhaps because it more or less excluded females, the youth movement in Germany historically possessed political tendencies, however these may be evaluated. The "youth movement" in the United States has revolved about the sexual-social relationship, with its glorification of the isolated idealized couple romantically in love. The energy that European students are likely to expend on politics will be devoted on the American campus to the election of the "Campus Queen."

HERE is the focal point of the modern student's time and energy, or fantasy, as the case may be. From one point of view, it is the exaggeration of an epoch which has lost the mystic experience of religious conversion, an epoch with an incomparable standard of living and leisure, increasingly regimented economically and politically, which turns to the adventure of romantic love as it finds its freedom of expression increasingly restricted in other areas. Their backs arch to the climbing wail of the saxophones, eyes closed, lips parted, as the revolving globe chases splotches of rainbow about the streamer-decked gymnasium. This is a ritual, both sacred and profane; a confused yearning for an inchoate whole: luxury, sex, escape, etherealized boundlessness. But that is the ultimately spiritual expression of dating. Dating operates on another level, a hard calculated game for prestige which matches the gongs and mokos of the Alorese, the scalps flaunted by the Comanche warrior.

Relatively few really play the game. In one study of dating at a state university, it was discovered that the majority of students went through college without having had a single date on campus. At another state university, student estimates consistently place at ten per cent the proportion of women who date regularly, at twenty per cent the proportion who date occasionally. Those who remain in the dormitories alone do so as a matter of personal preference only in a peculiar sense. Most typically, they prefer to deny themselves companionship rather than be seen with some one who falls low on the rating-dating status scale.

Nor does sex, narrowly defined, control dating behavior. In a clinical study which Stuart D. Loomis and I conducted ("The Pattern of Mental Conflict in a Typical State University," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, July 1947), we discovered that with one exception the specifically sexual

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problems presented at the campus clinic over a two-year period were bound up, not with sexual frustration, but with social rejection and consequent loss of emotional security. The yearning for prestige, to rate, to belong, was so strong that it blotted out any conscious consideration of organic frustration, even for the male student.

And in a milieu of rivalry where cross-sex relationships are no longer controlled by family, community, and church, but involve youngsters initially unknown to one another, with only the cliques of one's own sex guarding and evaluating, there arises a condition in which no one is sure of the other's motives. The other may declare love, but there is no jealous male relative standing in the background to enforce his protestation. A girl may lead a boy on for sheer perversity, but no relatives, no church or community will condemn her. As one co-ed insisted: "The fact remains that in many cases the men and the girls are so carefully sparring around one another, avoiding being played for a sucker, and at the same time trying to please and hold the other while they get just as much out of the situation as they can, that no very sincere relationship can possibly come of it."

A male student reported: "After the date, the boy will come back to the dorm. His friends, instead of asking him if he had a good time, will ask him if he got much. There is no sense in asking him if he had a good time, as a good time is based upon how much he got. It really is, to them, a more direct way of asking the same question."

Physical license is held in check by the very exploitative attitudes of the female cliques. A girl acquires prestige by displaying scalps in the form of dance programs, cigarette cases, compacts, and photographs of dates, all of whom are reported to be madly in love with her. She acquires prestige by dating often, and only high-prestige males, *provided* she is able to maintain her boast that she permits only the most perfunctory embraces. Since there is a constant interchange of information between the sexes regarding the dating behavior of both, the girl must not allow too wide a disparity between claim and practice.

One girl put the matter flatly: "If you rate, you don't have to give much, just enough to make them think they may get more by extending themselves in spending money and dancing attendance on you. Some of the girls claim they have to 'have' men, that they have the man's attitude toward sex, but they're just rationalizing. That's the only way they can get them." A fine, calibrated scale is maintained for sexual favors granted and received, which are carefully measured in advance, and doled out sparingly. And since body-morality is so important even to the so-called emancipated woman, in terms of present or, more typically, future marriage competition, there is every pressure to go no farther.

From the points of view of the moralist and the sensualist, the dating game tends to the opposite extremes of tragedy and farce. Youngsters who are not even friends exchange the most passionate embraces, but their passion may be aborted by mutual fear of the other's motives, and their endearments are rarely free from the ultimate consideration, the supreme campus goal, social prestige. One is tempted to invite the anger of the traditional moralist by suggesting that the "bad" thing is not so much the physical traffic as the motivation behind it, and the use made of it. Yet the hard-boiled code does cover a yearning for understanding, loyalty, affection. However deviously handled, these boy-girl relationships are in part designed to bridge the gap between family-centered childhood and marriage-centered adulthood.

Just how universal is this other world of the school, essentially parasitic, founded on an unlovely combination of romantic love and fierce rivalry in love? No general description ever applies evenly to a whole population, or even one of its segments, particularly a population so diverse as that of modern America. The claim being made here is that the patterns described do constitute a norm about which local youth

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groups everywhere in America revolve with a limited range of variation.

The other, older, world of the school arose in large measure from the insistence that the majority of our lower- and middle-class youth be provided with an extended formal education. But our upper-class youth, and the offspring of certain European immigrants who had brought with them a respect for intellectuality as a way of life, are gradually affected by the new world of the school. Thus Edward Y. Hartshorne has described the social behavior of the upper-class Harvard undergraduates as centering around dating, romantic love, clique rivalry (clubs, not fraternities), athletic contests, uniform dress, highly stylized manner and speech patterns, and anti-intellectuality, all of which are not different in kind from what can be observed on our state college campuses.

Nor is there any evidence that the veterans have changed the situation. While many have assumed marital and family responsibilities, scorn the younger rah-rah undergraduate, and are much more determined than the average civilian student to "get the most out of college," they at the same time intensify the trend toward anti-intellectuality —even though their impatience with any of "this stuff" which does not have immediate practical application is perfectly understandable. And, as the wave of veteran students subsides, the world of the fraternity, the football stadium, the campus hangout, and the junior prom regains its former glory.

Our focus of attention has been the students. Yet we might have concentrated on other areas of academic life with profit. Thus, the dean of the liberal arts college of one of our more eminent universities, recently interviewed for a newspaper feature story, said: no, he had no favorite author but he did enjoy, hugely, the Charlie McCarthy radio program.

Lincoln Steffens recognized the crisis in the school, but he blamed its functionaries. He pointed out that, instead of arousing intellectual curiosity, the teacher is more likely to stifle whatever intellectual curiosity youngsters may have brought with them. True enough, as the school has been enlarged, it has devoted itself more and more to efficiency, which means searching for more precise methods of examining the greater mass of students, a plethora of survey courses, and so on, while the rock base of education, the relationship between an individual and a book, or a teacher and a student, has been lost sight of. But these tangential efforts to turn the school into a replica of the factory, with its time studies and conveyor belt, result largely from the confused effort to do *something* with the majority of the students, those who have no initial curiosity, and whose social world discredits the process of acquiring education.

Perhaps devotion to the intellectual way of life—the abiding search for the yet unopened door of explanation beyond explanation—is something to which the majority should not be exhorted.

It was during the rule of Hadrian that state-controlled education reached its zenith of popular dissemination in the Roman Empire. It was also a time of unprecedented corruption, moral laxity, superstition, in which Roman literature, philosophy, and science entered the twilight of their long and dark night. During the golden age of American letters, in the middle of the 19th century, when popular acclaim of intellectuality reached a higher point than ever before or since, and there was intellectual ferment around the lyceum and public lectures and debates, our country was not yet blessed with compulsory education.

Unless all historical evidence up to now is in error, only a minority of any generation has ever been fired by the quest for understanding, and it appears quite likely that the modern school is actively reducing the size of that minority. The chief tragedy of modern education may be that by drafting the majority into schools the way is made more difficult for the individual. Today, those students who most completely embody the dominant campus values, those who unequivocally "rate," are more likely to be relaxed, spontaneous, and outgoing. The intellectuals, on the other hand, tend to be

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defensive, doctrinaire, withdrawn, lacking in self-assurance, and socially unpredictable. Ironically, those who most embody the traditional and official values of the school have become its pariahs, because that world of the school has little if any place for them, even though it continues to encompass them socially whether they will it or not.

In part to provide the sincere intellectual with a congenial social climate, Harry Elmer Barnes has proposed—how seriously, it would be difficult to say—that our colleges and universities be split up in such a way as to coincide with the diversity of student interests and goals. There would be the strictly vocational schools for those interested solely in job training; glorified country clubs would meet the requirements of those primarily interested in a good time; a few of the old prestige schools would be left standing for those upper-class youngsters who might desire to perpetuate a family tradition of attendance. And finally, the school dedicated to learning would be provided for those of unusual intellectual aptitudes and interests.

In some ways this would be an honest and truly efficient approach to the problem. However, the proposal would be most fiercely resisted by the anti-intellectual majority, those parents and their children who undermine the liberal arts program while pursuing the liberal arts degree. Degrees offered within such a diversified system of schools would inevitably possess different degrees of prestige; the majority would seek the more glittering intellectual badge, no matter what their real interests.

There are perhaps good reasons for avoiding drastic reforms in the schools. Like religion, education seems better suited to its functions of preserving a sense of history when its method as well as its content retains some fixity or continuity of tradition. There is always something ridiculous about devising new gadgets to transmit a cultural heritage. Then too, any further splintering of higher education according to the desires of students would further narrow the interplay of social experience, eliminating one of the few agents of integration left in our society. Finally, one should not overlook the fact that with everyone receiving compulsory high school education, the individual who wants to become educated—whether inside or outside of college—can still go it on his own. It is hard to conceive of a Jude the Obscure, completely cut off from all the instruments of education, in our generation.

If the school has failed, its failure is no more evident than that of other institutions. One world of the school, in however truncated a form, still preserves a common heritage. The other world of the school, though in many ways artificial and petty, and even brutal, maintains a certain human quality. The rating-dating complex, and the struggle for social prestige on the campus, do not exhaust social experience. A camaraderie based on the common experiences of taking examinations, eating together, loyalty to one's clique and athletic teams, the shared confidences and dreams of the bull session, softens the influence of campus competition, and fosters a sense of community that for many graduates seems to be lacking in later life. The saving grace of the other world of the school is the possibility it affords for the direct expression of certain values, however tawdry some of them may be. In comparison, the social life of the working adult is much more instrumental in character, much more devoted to living *at* the future, rather than in the present.

Yet without radical reform, there remain certain modifications of procedure possible for those teachers and administrators who regard the preservation of traditional values in education of primary importance.

The teacher might cease being gravely concerned about the gum-chewer and class-room knitter. Seeking to divert their preoccupation with dates, games, and social competition by pitching the level of discussion downward and sensationalizing it in order to catch their lethargy unawares (as is frequently done), only spoils the class-room for those few who can be reached. It takes tremendous effort of will to insist upon the intrinsic value of learning, to continue beating against the solid wall

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of apathy, but those few youngsters who are not completely caught in the campus whirl are heartened to discover an adult model and sanction for their heresy. Even some of the others may be benefited, for while the campus game will remain pre-eminent, at the very least they can learn that it is not universally venerated, and some may be led to examine their own juvenility.

The wisest course would seem to be indirect, not direct action. Attacking campus values head-on results only in a defensive attitude. On the other hand, a refusal to compromise is something squarely within the province of the teacher. That this will markedly benefit only a few does not destroy its value.

The administrator can likewise affirm a serious, adult purpose. Every refusal to inaugurate the commercialized football system; every determined defense of present educational requirements against further watering-down through the survey course, the general education curriculum, and the elective system; every effort to eliminate the obviously unfit—all these are steps in the right direction.

Those who consider any restriction of education to those intellectually qualified to benefit from it undemocratic would do well to read Thomas Jefferson on the question of higher education. His system of public education for the State of Virginia (it failed of adoption) had express provisions intended to "sweep out the rubbish annually." Only within recent decades has democracy come to be identified with equal treatment regardless of capability. (It is worth noting that pre-war Japan and fascist Germany had achieved a degree of equality in education as yet unparalleled in this country.)

ONE of the more characteristic and significant verbal fashions in the modern school is the expressed yearning for the "good deal." The good deal requires neither planning nor energy; it is not a goal toward which one strives. Rather, the good deal comes to one by importuning, by passively hoping, or, best of all, fortuitously. The good deal may be many things: a cancelled examination, an extended vacation, a new survey course which rambles all over history, science, and ethics, requiring a mastery of none of these and paying off with a high grade for a minimum of effort. It may mean being introduced to a "big wheel" whom one may contact after graduation in order to secure a cinch job in promotion. Even the few radicals on the campus appear to have little sense of the need for generating personal and group effort to accomplish their stated aims; instead, they sign petitions in droves, similarly genuflecting before the goddess of luck, begging her to rearrange the universe to give them a better deal.

We may be forced to return to earlier beliefs: in the value of the educative process as mental discipline; in the value of a hard, imposed task satisfyingly accomplished. Petitioning does not require mental discipline, but making and creating do. If Arthur Koestler is right, and all we can do in a chaotic present is to build cultural islands, then it would appear that schoolmen have an important task.

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THE NEW ANTI-SEMITISM OF THE SOVIET UNION

Its Background and Its Meaning

SOLOMON M. SCHWARZ

EVEN among the severest critics of the Soviet Union, it was until recently acknowledged that the "new" Russia had wiped out anti-Semitism: and Soviet sympathizers cited this achievement as an offset to charges that the whole Russian people had suffered loss of civil rights. So long as a Jew was not discriminated against *as Jew*, so long as he shared the civil deprivations of all citizens, that somehow was supposed to represent a net gain.

Even when it became clear that the "liquidations" following the Moscow trials of 1936-38 had struck a disproportionate number of highly placed Jews, most observers were quite ready to dismiss this as pure coincidence. The existence of any widespread popular anti-Semitism, much less of any official policy of anti-Semitism in the USSR, was rejected as unthinkable in the light of official pronouncements and presumed practice. The reports of anti-Semitic incidents that sometimes appeared in the press were interpreted to mean that whatever anti-Semitism did exist was inherited from Czarist Russia and confined to particularly backward groups, and had not yet withered away under the novel social conditions of Soviet Russia; there was no question but that anti-Semitic opinions would, with the passage of time, finally disappear under the operations of Soviet rule. Thus, it was inevitable that the current and continuing purge of Jewish intellectuals in the Soviet Union, with its strong anti-Semitic flavor, should have taken the world by surprise. In view of the thoroughness of this purge thirty years after the revolution, even the most sanguine can hardly avoid being shaken in their earlier beliefs that Russian anti-Semitism has been obliterated, or is in its death-bed stages.

WITHOUT warning or excuse, the leading Yiddish newspaper in the Soviet Union, *Einikeit*, was suspended after its issue of November 20, 1948. In the Ukraine, another Yiddish periodical, *Der Shtern*, was suspended for "serious manifestations of Jewish bourgeois nationalism," by which is evidently meant Zionism. "Emes," the Yiddish publishing house, has been closed and the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow dissolved. The six outstanding Yiddish writers—Pfeffer, Markish, Mistor, Halkin, Broderzon, and Bergelson—have been reported

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PERHAPS the only statement about the USSR that Americans—whether hostile or friendly—have been able to agree on is that "at least you can't deny that the Soviets put an end to anti-Semitism." In the face of recent plain evidence to the contrary, public opinion has gone from incredulity to bewilderment and confusion. Answering the questions "how much?" "what kind?" and "why at this time?" is ringed around with great difficulties: in Russia, no organizations exist either to study, seek out, or report anti-Semitism; no public opinion poll asks questions about it; and the observers who might be able to evaluate such a phenomenon are not allowed to enter and freely travel about the country. On the other hand there is a vast mass of relevant published material in Russian, which can be supplemented with the reports of individuals who have left Russia and other evidence. After study of such sources, SOLOMON M. SCHWARZ has endeavored to appraise the present wave of anti-Semitism in the USSR, to give its historical background, and to speculate on its causes. Dr. Schwarz is one of the recognized authorities on Russian political and economic history; he is the co-author of the standard work, *Management in Soviet Russian Industry and Agriculture*, and of many other important works on Soviet Russia in German, French, and Russian. He has recently completed a large book on Russian trade unions and labor, and is at work on a study on Russian nationalities policy. He was born in Russia in 1883, studied at many universities in Russia and Germany, was expelled from Russia in 1922, and came to this country in 1940. Nathan Glick collaborated with Dr. Schwarz in the preparation of the article.

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arrested, with no denial forthcoming from any Soviet source. The campaign against "homeless cosmopolitans" has marked Jews for its special victims: by printing their original Jewish names after their adopted Russian names, something which is never done in the case of non-Jews like Molotov (Scriabin) or Stalin (Djugashvili); and by such pointed remarks as that of the secretary of the Byelorussian Communist party, on February 17 of this year: "Only one theater in the Byelorussian Republics—a Jewish one—puts on unpatriotic plays in which life in America is praised."

The unexpectedness of this rapid succession of apparently anti-Semitic moves has caused commentators to improvise hasty explanations. The most popular of these is that Jews are, by cultural and familial ties, internationalist in outlook and therefore do not fit very snugly into the recent wave of officially fostered Russian nationalism. Another school of thought holds that the setting up of a Jewish state in Palestine has reawakened outlawed Zionist sympathies in the Jews of Russia proper as well as in the annexed sectors of Poland. Both of these explanations are pertinent, but they do not get to the heart of Soviet anti-Semitism. Even to begin to understand what is happening, it is necessary to recognize that anti-Semitism, far from having vanished from Russia with the Romanovs as is commonly supposed, has been substantially present in Soviet Russia during the last thirty years, in different forms and intensity during different phases of Soviet Russia's evolution. Far more significant and more ominous is the prospect that this latest phase may represent a new stage, that the anti-Semitism of today is not merely more intense than in recent years, but more official, and more seriously political in character.

UNDER the Czars anti-Semitism took root unevenly. The government's anti-Jewish policy was aimed at restricting Jews to an extended ghetto, the "Jewish Pale," which in the main consisted of peripheral regions inhabited by national minority groups: Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, the Ukraine, White Russia. In the Russian provinces proper, the population at large was out of contact with Jews in everyday life and did not experience a "Jewish problem." What anti-Semitism there was visibly carried the Czarist government seal and was in the service of a divide-and-rule policy. As the official creed, it permeated the society's aristocratic upper strata, affected various groups in the bureaucracy, and contaminated parts of the urban middle classes. However, for lack of immediate targets, it found little echo among the mass of people. Conditions were different, however, in those parts of the Jewish Pale that had been under Polish rule before the partitioning of Poland in the late 18th century. In these areas, of which the Western Ukraine was the most important, anti-Semitism had sunk deep roots among the peasantry. But even there, acute tension rose to the surface only for brief periods. The pogroms of the 1880's and early 1900's, deliberately launched by the Czarist regime, attracted limited support and this chiefly among the *Lumpenproletariat* of the city.

Compared with the wave of anti-Jewish violence that swept Russia's Southwestern provinces in 1918-1920, the earlier pogroms seem, in retrospect, mere local disturbances. While Czarist anti-Semitism before the Bolshevik revolution had failed to arouse mass response, counter-revolutionary propaganda, using anti-Semitic slogans in the turbulent and terror-haunted period of the civil war, could claim a large measure of success. Pogroms in the cities and villages of the Southern and Southeastern provinces of Russia took between 75,000 and 100,000 Jewish lives between 1918 and 1921, compared with about 1000 Jews killed in the pogroms in the 19th and early 20th centuries. (Forty-seven were killed in the Kishinev pogrom.)

For the new-born Soviet government the fight against anti-Semitism was not only a matter of principle but a necessity dictated by military strategy. In its famous decree of July 27, 1918 the Council of People's Commissars declared that "the anti-Semitic movement and anti-Jewish pogroms are a bane to the cause of the workers' and peasants' revolution," and appealed to "Socialist Russia's laboring people to combat this evil with all means. National enmity weakens our revolutionary ranks, disunites the labor front joined together regardless of nationality, and helps only our enemies." And, indeed, in the days following the close of the civil war, it seemed that the victory of the revolution had initiated equality and dignity for Russian

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Jews. At any rate, anti-Semitism was identified as a political weapon of the counter-revolution, which, by 1921, had been definitely defeated and disarmed, and outlawed. Once the Soviet Union was well on its way to a classless society and socialism, it was argued, the "real"—economic—root of anti-Semitism would die for lack of nourishment.

II

BEGINNING with the mid-1920's, however, a new current of anti-Semitism swept through the Soviet Union. It attracted the attention of the Soviet press and gave birth to a considerable body of literature opposing it. Contrary to the claims of official pronouncements, the new anti-Semitism was not a resurgence of traditional pre-revolutionary anti-Semitism; the facts contradict the official theory that the past was being revived in the cities by non-Sovietized newcomers from a traditionalist, reactionary countryside. The source of the new anti-Semitism lay among the dispossessed and declassed strata of the urban middle classes, and penetrated into the upper strata of industrial workers, the university students, the membership of the Communist Youth, and, last but not least, into the Communist party itself. The anti-Jewish stereotypes that became current among these groups were drawn from a primitive but popular hostility to the social stratification and social hierarchy created by the New Economic Policy (1923-1927), when the legalization of a semblance of private enterprise appeared to many as the harbinger of a returning capitalist society, and "the Jew" impressed himself on the anti-Semitic mind as the "NEP profiteer."

At this time many new workers in industry were recruited from the older middle-class elements, Jews and Gentiles alike. For such elements, almost the only means of social mobility was through the factory and the Communist Youth. At the same time, even while the number of factory workers rose, unemployment was high and rising. In such a situation of intense competition anti-Semitic charges were hurled against the Jews.

One of the first to raise the issue of the rising anti-Semitism was Mikhail I. Kalinin, chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, titular head of the Soviet state, who wrote in July 1926: "There are many letters and written questions addressed to speakers at public meetings, signed and unsigned, which refer to the Jewish question in general and to the transfer of Jews in the Crimea in particular. Some are clearly reactionary, bigoted, and anti-Semitic; others, like Comrade Ovchinnikov's letter, sincerely endeavor to find out why Jews are befriended by the Soviet government." (*Izvestia,* July 11, 1926.)

Later in the same year, Kalinin pointedly referred to a fertile source of this new anti-Semitic sentiment: "Why is the Russian *intelligentsia* perhaps more anti-Semitic today than it was under Czarism? This is a natural development. In the first days of the revolution the urban Jewish mass of intellectuals and semi-intellectuals threw itself into the channels of the revolution. As a nation oppressed, a nation which never participated in ruling, . . . this mass naturally flocked to the revolutionary construction job, and this is tied up with administration. . . . Just at the time when considerable parts of the Russian intelligentsia broke away, frightened of the revolution, just at that time the Jewish intelligentsia gushed into the channel of the revolution, filling it to a large percentage in proportion to its numbers, and started working in the revolutionary administrative organs." (First All-Union Convention of OZET in Moscow, November 15 through 20, 1926. Stenographic transcript.)*

*The dominance of the Jews in the Bolshevik apparatus was never more than a myth. From its very beginnings as an organized faction within the Russian Social Democratic movement in the early 1900's, Bolshevism failed to attract mass support among Jewish workers and intellectuals. Reporting on the 1907 convention of the Russian Democratic Workers Party, Joseph Stalin wrote:

"Statistical analysis has shown that among the Menshevik faction [the more moderate group] the majority were Jews, the next larger group Georgians, and the next, Russians. Conversely, the overwhelming majority of the Bolshevik faction were Russians. . . . Commenting on this, one of the Bolsheviks (Comrade Aleksinsky, I think) jestingly said that Mensheviks were a Jewish faction while the Bolsheviks were a truly Russian one, that it thus might be a good idea for us Bolsheviks to start a pogrom within the party." (*Works,* vol, 2, Moscow 1946, pp. 50f.)

The connection between the anti-Semitic jest and the anti-Semitic act is no new phenomenon. The jester himself, Grigory A. Aleksinsky, openly joined up with the anti-Semitic forces during the civil war.

During the 1917-18 revolution, Jewish liberal and left-wing groups proved equally recalcitrant. In

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OUTCROPPINGS of anti-Semitism in the middle 1920's became so frequent and violent that the Soviet press was compelled, as mentioned above, to take notice. A Soviet journalist, Mikhail Gorev, discussed the question in a number of articles in *Komsomolskaya Pravda,* the Moscow Young Communist paper, and later embodied reports of anti-Semitic incidents in a book, *Against the Anti-Semites* (1928):

"Comrade Gufeld from Smela (Cherkassy district) relates: 'In 1925-26 I worked in the Smela sugar refinery. Anti-Semitism there was very widespread. It happened that a "Jewboy" greenhorn would be put on the running gear, the carriage made to roll full speed, and then the "Jewboy" would be ordered to jump off the racing wheels. Then another entertainment was invented—"Jewboy" greenhorns would be doused with hot water. Or the fellows would form two lines and, yelling and shouting, would hurl the Jew back and forth between the two lines. When work clothes were to be distributed among the workers the stockkeeper simply announced: "No work clothes for longnosed Hayyims and Hershes, they can go peddle."'"

In a Bryansk plant a gang of young workers, including six Young Communists, harassed a young Jewish worker. At an informal meeting that followed this incident, a party observer wrote: "Party and Komsomol people among the audience kept silent. The secretary of the Komsomol cell behaved as if the cat had got his tongue. The impression obtained that they were in agreement with the anti-Jewish statements." (A. Chemerisskii, in *Communist Revolution* for March 1929).

Violence was frequent: "Lysenko, a young surveying student and member of the Komsomol, abused Sh. just because the latter happened to be the only Jew living in the dormitory. . . . Sh. . . . was . . . kept awake at night, forced to lie in bed with his eyes wide open. To awaken him, they hit him with a rule on the head, doused him with icy water, prodded his bare heels with a pair of compasses. . . . At the same Institute, hoodlums beat up a pregnant Jewish girl student, stamping on her belly with their feet." (Yefim Dobin, *The Truth about Jews,* Leningrad, 1928.)

Again and again it was the Communist Youth who were in the forefront of anti-Semitic campaigns. A Jewish Telegraphic Agency dispatch from Moscow, dated October 21, 1929, reported a demand made at a meeting of Communist students in Kiev for the establishment of a *numerus clausus* for Jewish students entering Soviet universities. Yet anti-Semitism as the concomitant of Soviet industrialization and proletarianization, processes regarded as the most progressive features of all social developments in the Soviet Union, was either too incomprehensible or too embarrassing to be openly discussed by the ruling party. The party leadership preferred to go on blaming "backward elements" for an attitude which the party's own reporters located among the Communist "vanguard" of the younger generation.

THE problem of enforcing the laws against anti-Semitism was complicated not only by the prejudice displayed by party members and Young Communists but by the anti-Jewish attitudes displayed by some local officials and lower-level government agencies, particularly in the Ukraine. Jewish Telegraphic Agency correspondents in 1925 were permitted to send out stories of quite a number of incidents that were disclosed by the administration.

A censor-approved dispatch from Moscow, June 20, 1925, stated: "The existence of anti-Semitism on the part of the Soviet administration in small towns mainly populated by

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fact, the Bolsheviks, according to the evidence of Samuel Agunsky, were hard put to find enough Jewish writers to start a pro-Soviet newspaper. (*Der Yiddisher Arbeter in der Komunistisher Bavegung,* 1917-1921. White Russian Gosizdat, Minsk, 1925, pp. 5f.)

Even after the Soviet rule had become firmly established, and articulate anti-Soviet opposition in the ranks of the Jewish socialist and labor movement had been eliminated, Jewish participation in the Communist party remained limited. Twice—in 1922 and 1927—national affiliation was counted when the Communist party of the Soviet Union took a membership census. The percentage of Jews among party members and probationers was 5.2 per cent in 1922, and 4.3 per cent in 1927 (*Statistical Materials on Jewish Demography and Economy,* No. 4, Moscow, March 1929, p. 29), while the proportion of Jews in the total Soviet population, in 1926, was 1.8 per cent. But it would be more accurate to compare the percentage of Jewish Communists against the 8.2 per cent proportion of Jews within the urban population, since the Communist party at that time was composed preponderantly of city-dwellers.

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Jews was admitted by a member of the special commission appointed for the purpose of investigating this condition. A Jewish member of this commission writing in *Emes* admits 'anti-Semitism is practiced openly in numerous places.' The writer cites many glaring instances where complaints were made which the district authorities disregarded, or were slow to take action on [after] the [additional] complaints of the commission."

Another dispatch from Moscow, September 4, 1925, reported: "Complaints of mistreatment of the Jewish population in the smaller towns and villages were voiced in various parts of the Soviet Union. Expressions of these complaints are found in almost every issue of the Yiddish Communist press appearing in Soviet Russia. Mistreatment of even Jewish invalids in the government invalid homes [and] terrorization of the Jewish population reached such an extent that, according to a recent issue of *Der Shtern*, Jewish Communist paper in Kharkov, when three members of Kiev militia were arrested for frequent mistreatment, abuse and acts of terror, no one was willing to testify against them for fear of revenge."

Shortly afterwards, on October 19, 1925, a JTA cable from Kharkov reported "open charges against local Communist authorities of violating the Soviet law in their attitude toward the Jewish population." Instances of discrimination in the allocation of apartment space, in tax assessment, even in government employment agencies, became more and more numerous. "When personnel was reduced and efficiency measures were introduced in the organization," wrote one Soviet journalist, "Jewish employes were more often discharged and met with considerably greater difficulties in finding new jobs than was the case for employes who were Ukrainians, Great-Russians, etc." (G. Ledat, *Anti-Semitism and Antisemites*, Leningrad, 1929, p. 52.)

The epidemic spread and assumed such menacing proportions that the subject had to be treated in a *Pravda* editorial on February 19, 1929 (the first and, so far as can be ascertained, the sole editorial ever to have dealt with anti-Semitism). Under the title, "Heed the Fight against Anti-Semitism," *Pravda* said: "More and more frequently reports on manifestations of anti-Semitism find reflection in the press. . . . When plants where anti-Semitic acts occurred are being investigated we are invariably faced with the one dangerous fact that there is connivance on the part of the local party, trade union, and Komsomol organizations; this alone makes it possible for the anti-Semitic persecution campaign to go on unpunished for months and years. The tortured worker finds no protection; anti-Semitic slang becomes current in the shops; and the officers of the cells, work councils, Komsomol prefer not to 'meddle' in an unpleasant business, prefer not to start 'trouble,' etc."

III

In the 1920's anti-Semitism, as we have seen, spread with the disintegration of the old urban society, whose dispossessed strata carried it through their younger generation into the industrial plants, where large groups of new industrial workers were easily swayed against the "Jewish intruder." Unemployment was at that time still substantial, and anti-Semitic sentiment, stimulated by competition for jobs, was fanned. Yet throughout there was no ambiguity in the government's attitude.

The rather sudden decrease of anti-Semitic incidents, as reported in the Soviet press after 1930, was, however, less the achievement of direct government action than the product of an abrupt change in the social and economic climate. With the inauguration of the first Five Year Plan, the comparatively mixed and flexible economy of the NEP was uprooted and a one-track society violently established in its place. Economic planning embraced every aspect of Soviet life, which was now subordinated to one supreme law: the speed-up. As industrialization and collectivization swept the country millions of new jobs were created, thereby calming the economic fears of the anti-Semite. The hostility directed against Jews competing for the better jobs when such jobs were few gave way to rivalry for high output as a means of obtaining the highest wage premiums and social privileges.

Changes in the economic climate were paralleled by a conspicuous change in the nation's social pattern, which also removed some of the stimuli for anti-Semitic reactions. Under the NEP Jews had been numerous among "NEPmen," the peculiar new bourgeoisie which had flourished during that

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period, and, in addition, had been strongly represented in many small-trade fields. Although the number of Jewish small tradesmen was many times the number of Jewish NEPmen speculators, the attitude displayed by substantial sectors of the population towards small Jewish tradesmen had been largely determined by their hostile reactions to the big NEP profiteers: the dialectics of anti-Semitism transformed "the Jew" into a speculator and NEP tycoon by definition. Anti-NEP trends visibly tinged the anti-Semitic leanings of urban workers, of university students, and especially of large groups of Young Communists reared according to rather primitive notions of social classes and the class struggle.

With the inauguration of the Five Year Plan all the NEPmen were mercilessly eliminated; quite a number of them were physically "liquidated," and the entire social group disappeared from the Soviet scene. Private small trade, though it was not abolished, lost the odium of speculative profiteering, not merely because no NEPmen were left to make all private trading look highly suspect and "capitalistic," but also because ever more rigid controls and the all-pervasiveness of central planning severely restricted the possibilities of commercial speculation. This development undermined one of the deepest sources of mass anti-Semitism as it had crystallized in the 1920's.

Finally, one might point to another factor leading to the decline of the anti-Semitism of the 20's. As vast numbers of workers were swept into industry, the "newcomers" were no longer identified as Jews alone. The ethnic composition of the Soviet labor force changed as members of national groups very different from the Russians began to make up a sizable proportion of it. Conflicts in industry of the sort we have described were no longer between Russians and Jews alone: such anti-Semitic incidents, to which references can still be found in the early 30's were submerged in a flood of cases of "great-power chauvinism" in industry involving other national groups.

THE curve of anti-Semitism dropped to its lowest point in the middle of the 1930's. This point was not, however, zero. Anti-Semitic feeling still was present in a mute, subdued form, occasionally exploding in individual anti-Jewish aggression.* But it was no longer conspicuous as a surface phenomenon nor did it demand as much public attention as it had in the late 1920's. In 1935 and 1936 the Soviet ruling groups manifested a greater willingness than before to attack anti-Semitism openly and to give this more firmly expressed attitude deliberate publicity. The shift in emphasis was due to considerations of both foreign and domestic policy.

In foreign policy the essential motivation grew from the fact that relations with Nazi Germany had become strained. By opposing its official rejection of anti-Semitism to Hitler's own monstrous anti-Semitism, the Soviet government sought sympathy among liberals and even conservatives in the democratic nations of the West. This was the Popular Front period announced by the Congress of the Communist International in Moscow in 1935. Maxim Litvinov mounted the platform at the League of Nations to make eloquent pleas for humanitarianism and peace. Russia, in other words, turned its best face westward, and the leadership took pains to scrub it clean of any taint of anti-Semitism.

Internal developments, however, were decisive. In the mid-1930's, the Soviet regime passed through a real crisis. It faced the alternative of, on the one hand, relaxing its dictatorial rule and gradually developing certain democratic forms of government and social organization, or, on the other hand, of consolidating the dictatorship by stabilizing the new social foundations of its power and building a fully totalitarian system purged of the vague libertarian, democratic traditions of the early days of the revolution.

The regime vacillated in its attitude; only in 1937 was the die cast in favor of totalitarianism. However, as long as the decision was not yet made irrevocably, the prospect of a democratic future remained more than an illusion. In 1936 the new Soviet constitution was promulgated, promising universal suffrage, the secret ballot, and the popular election of legislative representatives at all levels. Anti-Semitism was bound to fade in this optimistic atmosphere of political expansion, and vigorous denunciations of it were in line with the "democratic" mood displayed by the

*A number of references to anti-Semitic incidents in 1934 and 1935 have been collected from Soviet Yiddish-language publications by Jacob Lestchinsky, *Dos Sovetishe Yidntum*, New York, p. 263.

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Soviet leadership. Speaking on the draft of the new Constitution at the Eighth Soviet Congress in November 1936, Molotov contrasted Stalin's unequivocal attack on anti-Semitism (in a speech the latter had made in 1931) with the "cannibalism" of the Nazis, and expatiated on his own "attitude to the Jewish question":

"Whatever may be said by present day cannibals from the ranks of fascist anti-Semites, our fraternal feeling towards the Jewish people is determined by the fact that it gave birth to the genius who created the ideas of the Communist liberation of mankind, Karl Marx, who gained scientific domination over the supreme achievements of German culture as well as of the culture of other peoples; that the Jewish people along with the most fully developed nations produced a great number of outstanding men of science, technology, and art; that it gave many heroes to the revolutionary struggle against the oppressors of the working people; and that in our country it brought and continues to bring to the fore more and more excellent, most talented leaders and organizers in all spheres of constructive and defense work for the cause of socialism. All this determines our attitude to anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic bestiality wherever they may arise." (*Pravda,* November 30, 1936.)

IV

THE firmness displayed in Molotov's speech did not last long. Not long after it was delivered the Stalinist regime made its final decision to abandon democratic aspirations, and it instituted an intensified reign of terror. The first step was a purge of the party that surpassed all precedent in range and ferocity.

Paralleling the totalitarian purge, a new anti-Semitic current appeared, very different in its manifestations from that of the latter 1920's. It was less violent and less explosive but more tenacious, reflecting a trend in the various bureaucratic groups toward the elimination of Jews from influential positions and the reduction of their proportion in occupations to be reserved for the elite. Post-purge anti-Semitism was neither reported nor publicly censured. Within the framework of official statements and announcements it simply did not exist. But to the extent that personnel data on the Soviet elite can be made available, the cold and silent squeezing-out of Jews becomes clearly evident in many areas of Soviet life.

A characteristic example of such indirect evidence of the existence of an anti-Jewish policy is an analysis of the elections to the Supreme Soviet held in the annexed Eastern Polish provinces on March 4, 1940. Among the 43 members elected to the Union Soviet and the 12 to the Soviet of Nationalities, there were Ukrainians, White Russians, Poles, but not a single Jew—either from Bialystok or Grodno, Lvov or Pinsk (*Pravda,* March 30, 1940). In Lvov, whose population was thirty per cent Jewish, only two Jews were elected to the local Soviet of one hundred and sixty members. "Moscow seems to take the attitude that in East Galicia the Ukrainians alone should have political influence, and therefore Jews are not admitted to leading positions even when they are Communist party members" (*JTA News,* February 25, 1940).

The purge of 1936-38 made the Jews a particularly easy target for attack and social ostracism. In the first place, it was aimed against that section of the generation of active Communists which had personified the internationalist tradition of the party. Internationalism, as advocated by the "oppositionists," was branded as the disguise of traitors and spies in the employ of foreign military intelligence. Nationalistic trends, which previously had been censured as "great-power chauvinism," now seemed vindicated. Primitive Russian nationalism spread rapidly, infiltrating the Communist party and the upper crust of Soviet society generally. Since the outstanding and most widely publicized personalities denounced at the Moscow trials had been Jews—Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek—treason to the fatherland became associated with the names of Jewish leaders.

Also liquidated in the great purge, though with far less publicity, was an entire generation of Jewish leaders particularly concerned with Jewish affairs. Among these we should mention Dimanshtein, formerly Commissar for Jewish Affairs, later chairman of OZET; Liberger, executive committee chairman of the Provincial Soviet of the Jewish Autonomous Province in Birobidjan; Khavkin, secretary of the Birobidjan Provincial Committee of the CPSU; Litvakov, editor of *Emes* (died in jail); former Bund leaders who had joined the Communist party in the early

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1920's, Rakhmiel Vainshtein and Ester Frumkin; Chemerisskii, Merezhin, Lipets-Petrovsky, and a score of others. (An extensive list of names was compiled, from data published in the Soviet press, by G. Aronson, *Jewish Daily Forward*, January 8, 1938.) In the course of the purge heavy blows hit the entire structure of the Jewish communal and cultural organizations and practically terminated the organizational existence of the Jewish group as a recognized cultural and ethnic minority.

THESE developments provide the preliminary setting for the widespread mass anti-Semitism that seemed to infect every phase of Soviet society during World War II. Inevitably the Hitler-Stalin pact placed an official *imprimatur* on subterranean anti-Jewish feeling. The pact implied not only peace with Germany but also the toning-down of the ideological fight against Hitlerism. This in turn caused Soviet authorities to keep quiet about Nazi atrocities and particularly about the increased persecution of Jews in Germany and elsewhere. Not content with a position of neutrality toward Hitlerite ideology, the regime also made known its marked disapproval of aggressive denunciation of Nazism. In his speech to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on October 31, 1939 (printed in *Pravda* for November 1, 1939) Molotov asserted that "to wage a war such as the war for 'the annihilation of Hitlerism,' is not only senseless but also criminal." By its tacit toleration and non-criticism of the increasing abominations of the Nazis (Hitlerism, said Molotov in the same address, was "a matter of taste"), the Soviet government made Nazi anti-Semitism appear inconsequential and rendered anti-Semitic inclinations morally tolerable.

ONE tragic consequence of this policy was that, when the Germans broke the non-aggression pact and invaded Russia, the Soviet Jews were left completely unprepared for the Nazi extermination program. In a report addressed from White Russia to the representative of the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Areas attached to the Supreme Command of the German Army, a Nazi occupation official wrote in July 1941: "The Jews are strikingly ill-informed about our attitude towards them and about how the Jews are treated in Germany or even in Warsaw, which to them after all is not too remote a place. If they were not, it would be superfluous for them to ask whether we in Germany have different treatment for Jews and other citizens. Although they do not expect to be granted equal rights with the Russians under the German administration, they do believe that we will leave them alone if they diligently apply themselves to their work." (From the collection of German documents in the YIVO archives, New York.)

There has been an attempt by Soviet writers, particularly Ilya Ehrenburg, to create the impression that masses of Jews were rescued by their non-Jewish neighbors in the German-occupied areas of the USSR. In his preface to *Merder fun Felker* (2nd collection, Moscow 1945), Ehrenburg cited "the facts which prove Soviet solidarity, the strength of the fraternity of peoples, which expressed themselves in the efforts of many Russians, White Russians, Poles, Ukrainians to rescue Jews from slaughter." Despite his great pains to assemble such instances, he records a total of ten incidents in which a total of twenty-four Jews was rescued, including two episodes where the help given to Jews seemed to have been not altogether disinterested.

The number of rescues of Jews by Soviet non-Jews was quite small. Vasily Grossman, well-known Soviet writer and war correspondent, who visited the liberated Ukrainian provinces east of the Dnieper late in 1943, wrote that he had met only one Jew in the whole area. In chance encounters he was told that isolated Jews had been seen in Kharkov and Kursk; Ehrenburg told him that in Northern Ukraine he had come across a Jewish girl who had been with the partisans. "That is all," was Grossman's summation. (*Einikeit*, November 25 and December 2, 1943.)

At approximately the same time a Lieutenant Shlemin visited liberated Gomel in White Russia and failed to find a single Jew in that city or its neighboring towns (*Einikeit*, December 2, 1943). In the final analysis the number of Jews—and more specifically, of Jewish children—saved in German-occupied Soviet territories compares very unfavorably with the number of Jews rescued from Nazi persecution by non-Jews in

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France, Belgium, Italy, Holland, and even Poland.

One reason for the passivity of Soviet citizens in the face of the Nazi program is to be found in the conditions of Soviet life. For decades they had been drilled to obey government orders, to keep silent in the face of violence and brute force, to suppress all spontaneous leanings that might result in bringing political suspicion upon them. Unprepared to react to the rule of force, they remained silent, inactive in the face of Nazi terror against the Jews. Even when the atrocities committed against Jews filled them with horror and revulsion, they looked on benumbed, paralyzed.

Of tremendous importance to the surviving Jews in the Nazi-occupied provinces (between 1941 and 1944) was the partisan movement, which carried on sporadic guerilla warfare against the Nazis. The Jews were presented with the choice between certain death at home or escape to the woods where there was at least a chance of survival. Among non-Jews it was as a rule only the able-bodied who went underground or joined the partisans. But Jews fled with their whole families, aged and infirm and small children as well as adults capable of bearing arms. Thus Jewish family camps came into being in the forests and special Jewish detachments were set up whose chief task it was to protect these camps. Many young Jewish combatants, however, sought to join non-Jewish partisan groups that were already operating in the field. Their experiences form a depressing chapter in the history of Soviet anti-Semitism.

One of these Jewish guerillas, Moshe Kaganovich, compiled an impressive number of first-hand accounts by Jewish partisans of their experiences with non-Jewish groups. These are contained, together with Kaganovich's analysis of them, in *Der Yidisher Ontayl in Partisaner-Bavegung fun Sovet-Rusland* (Central Historical Commission of the Partisan Federation [PAKHAKH], Rome, Italy, 1948). The overwhelming impression left by these stories is that anti-Semitism had infected many Russian partisan detachments, even where Jews fought alongside non-Jewish Russians. "In the woods," writes Kaganovich, "the Jewish partisan had to fight also against anti-Semitically biased partisans. Not for a single moment did he have a chance to forget that he was a Jew. He was constantly reminded of it. . . ."* There were episodes of fraternity, as when individual Russian detachments assigned food from their own stocks to the Jewish family camps, but Kaganovich mentions only four such incidents.

After three years of experience in the partisan ranks, most of the Jewish partisans in White Russia and the Ukraine became so bitter that the prospect of living in the Soviet Union came to be repugnant to them, and as soon as the Soviet government permitted "repatriation" to Poland most of them hastened to avail themselves of this opportunity to leave the country. This mass exodus is an eloquent expression of the tragic situation in which Soviet Jews find themselves today—except that most of them are not offered the opportunity of "repatriation."

IN THE non-occupied Soviet areas anti-Semitism, both of the native stripe and that fanned by Nazi propaganda, spread widely during the war, when people sought scapegoats for miseries they suffered. The government pursued a policy of inactivity and silence in the face of these developments. The large number of Polish Jews—deportees, evacuees, refugees—in the Eastern provinces became objects of suspicion and hostility. In a report submitted to the American Jewish Committee on the fate of Polish Jews in wartime Russia, Dr. Jerzy G. Gliksman, a Warsaw lawyer and an observer not given to exaggeration, who spent a number of years in the Soviet Union—in prisons, camps, and the residential centers of Polish deportees and refugees—had this to say about the anti-Semitism that Polish Jews encountered in Soviet Central Asia:

"At work, deportees met with the local population, Russian, Ukrainian, Tartar, or other, either free or also deported. They were often anti-Semitic. While working with Jews they tried to inconvenience their work, and molest them as much as they could. The comparatively poor output of the Jewish deportees—caused by physical exhaustion and lack of previous experience in physical work—was ascribed to their unwillingness for physical labor, which the local population

*A detailed account of the anti-Semitic incidents related in the partisan documents may be found in an article by this writer on the partisan movement in *Modern Review* for January-February 1949.

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took as a typically Jewish characteristic. Such also was often the opinion of the managers and directors of the various enterprises where deportees were employed. The high-ranking functionaries . . . sometimes also comported themselves with undisguised unfriendliness toward the Jews, assigning them the hardest tasks.

"Even representatives of the NKVD, who are the most decisive and authoritative factor in Soviet life, were not free of anti-Semitism, favoring non-Jewish refugees while at the same time unmistakably pestering Jewish ones. (*Jewish Exiles in Soviet Russia 1939-43*, manuscript in Library of Jewish Information, American Jewish Committee.)

There is equally good documentation for anti-Semitism in the Russian Army, in the Ukraine after the war, and elsewhere in Russian life. Because in the Ukraine anti-Semitic feeling coincided with anti-Soviet sentiment, an attempt was made in the post-war period to combat both simultaneously, but also to do this silently, by gradually conditioning the local population to accept as a matter of course the presence of some Jews in high positions in the arts, the professions, industry, and the party machine. The strength of anti-Semitism, though, is indicated by the nearly complete absence of Jews in the local administrative machine.

In other parts of the Soviet Union, however, where anti-Semitism is not linked with anti-Sovietism, it is indulged by the authorities. In the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, for example, the party machine today hardly numbers any Jews among organizational leaders or ranking officials, in striking contrast to the situation in the 1920's or early 1930's. Not once in recent years has the present writer found any press references to Jewish individuals serving as provincial party committee secretaries in any one of the numerous provinces of the Russian SFSR. The Soviet diplomatic service, which once included many Jews, today does not contain a single Jew in any position of importance.

Most clearly manifest in the postwar years is the creeping, half-heartedly disguised anti-Semitism of Soviet officialdom, which first flowered in the late 1930's and which may be labeled the "new anti-Semitism." Its aim, and it has been increasingly successful in attaining this purpose, is to relegate Jews to the background in all important spheres of Soviet life. In general, the bureaucratic classes in non-democratic—and in some democratic—countries tend to show an aversion to minority groups, especially Jews, and to resist their admission to government service. They instinctively seek to preserve the homogeneity of the privileged caste, to prevent dissension from within, and to minimize the danger of adverse publicity and democratic interference from outside, and the more this bureaucracy is identified as the fount of political power, the more rapidly does it congeal, and the more savagely does it fight to exclude from its greener pastures those individuals and groups who are in any way "different." In Czarist Russia the exclusion of Jews from government service was traditional and almost complete. The tradition was interrupted but not completely eradicated by the revolution. In the course of the first twenty years of Soviet rule, when legal restrictions were abolished, the proportion of Jews among government officials naturally increased, although it never was as high as anti-Semites claimed it to be. And even during that period, certain branches of government service (e.g., railroads) remained closed to Jews.

To close observers of the Russian scene, then, the appearance for the first time of signs of anti-Jewish feeling in official government organs does not come as a complete surprise: it fits well into this most recent stage in the history of anti-Semitism in Russia, the stage that began in the late 30's. One claim of the Soviet government is justified: the old anti-Semitism, the anti-Semitism of the Pale, has been greatly reduced, following upon the migration of large numbers of Jews to the cities of Russia proper and their absorption into industry as workers and government as white-collar employes. This anti-Semitism, it is true, was fanned to a deadly flame by the German occupation—but it is not likely that it will again play a decisive role for the remnants of Russian Jewry. In any case, the centers of Jewish population, even before the Nazi onslaught, were no longer in the Pale: even less so today.

Neither is it likely that the type of industrial anti-Semitism that greeted the new Jewish workers in industry in the 1920's will continue to play a crucial role for the Jews. Rather, it is the bureaucratic anti-Semitism

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that we have described that is most important for the Jews today—and that, conceivably, may be the most dangerous.

The particular virulence of the present purge of Jewish intellectuals—the purge of Jews from the political apparatus having been to a large extent already achieved—is apparently due to the convergence of the revived bureaucratic anti-Semitism of the late 30's with the postwar growth of Russian nationalism as a political instrument of the Soviet government. Unquestionably such specific factors as the wave of general xenophobia sweeping Russia—a xenophobia which daily becomes part of the permanent cultural atmosphere of the country rather than a passing excess—as well as the Soviet disappointment over the composition of the new Jewish state, also play an important part in the genesis of the incidents that are arousing apprehension among Jews everywhere.

But it is to the careful study of the Russian system that we must look for the social context in which such political and diplomatic developments bear fruit in anti-Semitic sentiments and actions. The chief factor in that social scene is the vast Russian state bureaucracy, which in defending and advancing its own interests, internally and externally, has already succeeded in squeezing out those of its members who belong to the weakest and most susceptible ethnic group. In the nightmarish conditions which now prevail in Russia, anti-Semites in the bureaucracy, on all levels, will be able to act with greater and greater freedom against Jews. It appears likely that so long as the Soviet Union remains a closed society, paranoiacally suspicious of the outside world and preventing any renewal or revitalization of the bureaucratic apparatus by free elections or free discussion, anti-Semitism will be an inevitable component of its new order, and become a furtive though nonetheless real political weapon in the hands of the government classes as their interest dictates.

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PORTRAIT OF THE MYTHICAL GENTILE

One Stereotype Breeds Another

WAYNE CLARK

DURING the past five years we have seen the most rapid construction of a literary myth since the carpentry of the Byronic hero. I refer to the conventional Gentile, who was exposed in the novel *Earth and High Heaven,* and subsequently performed on the screen in *Crossfire* and *Gentleman's Agreement.* By the time he reached the novels *Focus* and *Eagle at My Eyes,* he had already been pared down to a flat uni-dimensional figure with no qualities outside of his attitude toward Jews.

The speed with which the stereotype Gentile evolved is particularly astounding when one recollects the centuries of refinements behind the only comparable figure, the stereotype Jew (Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* drew on two-hundred-year-old sources, Dickens had Shakespeare and Chaucer, etc.). How could such a solidly built cliché spring into print in fifteen hundred days?

The answer, of course, is that the Gentile myth is not so new as all that. For this figure can be traced unmistakably to the *goy* of Jewish folklore, shaped out of a thousand years of unhappy history. No Gentile whose life is linked to Jewish communities needs novels to tell him about the *goyim.*

Early enough one asks oneself—does this figure *exist?*—is it, in fact, myself? I find the most illuminating aspect of the Gentile experience in this business of being personally confused with the myth—of being appraised as *shiksa* rather than woman.

I HAVE never suffered any of the more desperate manifestations of this confusion—for instance, I have never seen a son mourned as dead by his parents because of his marriage to a Gentile. But I shall not forget the day I was told I had not laughed at a particular joke because no Gentile could properly savor it. I still remember the joke, too. A very devout Jew robs the poor-box in his synagogue and is caught. "But why would you, the most pious of us, rob the temple?" he is asked. "Well," he answers, "religion is religion, but stealing is my profession." There it is, and I've never convulsed anyone —Jew or Gentile—with it subsequently.

I think my essential response to life as a *shiksa* continues to be surprise. I remember a summer when I helped one of my instructors to prepare his dissertation. It took six intensive weeks in a library during which we were on the terms of two soldiers in a fox hole. When we had finished, he asked what I thought would be fun for his children during August. I suggested summer camp. "I think not," he answered. "I know you Gentiles like to be free of your children, but I'm Jewish enough to want them near me all the time." After that I never knew whether he was dealing with me as *goy* or student or human being. A friend to whom I complained said this was insoluble; she herself could not deal with the weird effects of her Jewishness in that same instructor's seminar, where all the other students were Gentile. She told me about taking a hike with several of the students. Toward midday she suggested that they open the hampers that had been brought along and eat

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HAVE Jews, reacting to the attempts of the non-Jewish world to fit them to a stereotype, created in their turn a mythical Gentile, composed of a whole host of quite unsubstantiated generalizations? WAYNE CLARK, speaking from personal experience, thinks so, and here lists some of the presumed Gentile traits which she believes all too many Jews accept as representing reality. Since her graduation from Vassar in 1945, Miss Clark has been record reviewer for *Glamour,* a member of the editorial staff of *Good Housekeeping,* and a contributor to *Listen.*

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luncheon. There was a curiously embarrassed refusal, and they walked all day without food. When they returned to the campus in the evening my friend, disregarding protests, began immediately to eat a sandwich. The famished group stared at her, then someone blurted out: "We thought you couldn't eat ham sandwiches, and the kitchen packed nothing else."

Later I came to know more of this appalling delicacy. As Jews learn about "kikes" I learned something about the *goyim*. Not everything, of course, but enough to permit me to sketch the general outline of the middle-class American Myth-Gentile.

GENTILE ANTI-SEMITISM. The nucleus of the stereotype *goy* is, of course, his omnipresent anti-Semitism. It is rooted so deeply in him that he is almost without responsibility for it. Like his libido, it acts in every situation. Some Gentiles, the philo-Semites, turn this aggression against themselves, shouting: "Jews are better!"; but this too merely imprisons the Jews in their old position—special and separate. So the Gentile cannot remedy his anti-Semitism: it is "in his nature"; indeed, it *is* his nature.

The Gentile Intellect is a rough-hewn, primitive mechanism with no more than a gloss of civilization that inevitably dulls in crises. It has few resources, the slenderest mnemonic endowment, and a debilitating torpor; it reaches elevated points only by a kind of brute patience. There is no intuition and little culture in this mind, so that it is necessarily gullible, escapist, prey to unselective acceptance of racial nonsense, adolescent entertainment (sports, club activities, tasteless group affinities), and bad art. The Gentile suspects conceptual thinking because he has no capacity for it; his mind is neat as a mountain is neat. Even the educated Gentile seems somehow to evade the consequences of intellectuality. He is depressed by alternatives, and can face competitive *Weltanschauungen* only by liquefying them and shaking them together with all the systems of history in a compendium of maxims where conflict is impossible.

The Gentile Family is a strained, loveless complex without devotion and therefore without friction. The children leave it without pangs, never return, do not believe in establishing stable families themselves. Gentile children are spoiled with possessions and kept from achieving maturity. Gentile children are precocious and well-mannered. Gentile children are dull and rude. Gentile families spend enormous fortunes on schools and lessons, and insist that children do well even at the expense of health. Gentile families distrust over-preoccupation with education and are horrified by a child who loses his perspective to the extent of respecting and practicing thinking. The Gentile is ashamed of a bookish child, and blocks him as forcibly as possible. For this reason the Gentile who devotes himself to culture is often so triumphant in the mere achievement of an occupation that he does not advance very far in it unless his gifts are enormous. Nor is he usually able to overcome the effect of the sterile years in which he lived unawakened in his sluggish family. Gentile mothers give their daughters excellent sex instruction, which is why no *shiksas* have promiscuous love affairs. Gentile mothers give their daughters such ghastly sexual inhibitions that they are driven to near nymphomania.

The Gentile Personality has a characteristic, stylish reserve. The Gentile does not often confide, and friendships can span years without enveloping his attitude toward his children or the extent of his fidelity to his wife. His optimism is unshakable; he has no complex anxieties or unresolved tensions. He loathes cynicism and feels a special hostility for the nervous, sceptical peering he considers characteristic of the Jewish intellectual. He is without curiosity about his friends, but has no scruples about using what he does know about them as small talk. He is decently mannered, stingy, fathomlessly hypocritical; he is inarticulate, humorless, and incapable of love.

THE GENTILE IN BUSINESS is unscrupulous in dealing with Jews, but with his own

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"sort" he is usually honorable and trustworthy. He is also slow-witted, conservative, and unimaginative. He needs far more money than is actually necessary to get a given result, and he lacks the resourcefulness that can stave off losses in a difficult situation. He is despicable to his employes . . . he is courteous but remote to his employes . . . he is generous and paternalistic to his employes. He is incredibly lazy . . . he is incredibly hard-working.

Gentile Appetites. All Gentiles are drunkards. They have not only debauched themselves, but have made drunkards of many Jews. The Gentile drinks enormously, but without savor, being insensitive to vintage and admixture. He sets a sparse, inept table based on a compulsive repetition of plain meats, vegetables, and scarcely sweetened fruit pies. He is ashamed of his craving for sweets: his passion for layer cakes, sundaes, and all things a la mode is never indulged in his home. His whole approach to food is marked by this double standard: in restaurants he looks for all the experiences of taste, but he attaches a kind of virtue to the ascetic contents of his refrigerator.

Gentile Sexuality. The *goy* has mastered little of the technique of voluptuousness. He cannot relax, or spin out a pleasure. The Gentile woman is similarly blighted, having not enough passivity to provoke conquest, and not enough concupiscence to force it. Moreover, her failure with artifice, plus her inability to solve her sexuality, compel her to reject the sensual climate completely by early middle age. And because she never possessed nostalgia, she can neither examine nor manage her senses at any point in her life. Yet the *goy* desires the long, fragrant route to satiety, even though he cannot contrive it, and must ever rush toward the apéritif, the orgasm, the first burst of sleep.

The sex act of Gentile with Gentile is a swift, limited matter, tormented by inhibitions, without exploration or experiment. The norm is established with the first intercourse, and adhered to thereafter. On the other hand, the sex act of Gentile and Jew is inevitably and even inventively carnal. This is because the Gentile feels bound by no taboo in the union; his tensions dissolve, and he behaves toward his partner as toward a prostitute. A Jew is fabulously alluring to a Gentile, for a Gentile believes a Jew is more sensitive, responsive, and potent.

The Gentile feels that marriage with a Jew is an act of blood pollution in the strictest tribal sense. Every Gentile, however devoted, is always subcutaneously exacerbated by his mate's Jewishness. Under stress, he will refer to it insultingly, and he will openly deplore the measure of Jewish blood in his children. Under the best circumstances he will be magnanimous; under the worst circumstances he will link all misfortunes to his wife's Jewishness, even to the point of using it to explain his own defections.

THIS is the face of the Myth-Gentile. I know few Jews who believe he exists as a whole, but there seem to be few, also, who do not believe some of these traits typical. Elliot Cohen remarked once that the *goy* image is suspiciously like the reflections of a city dweller about any yokel, or even like the typical European view of an American. And it is true that the *goyim* have the universal, faceless quality of any strange people. (Why they have remained strange is, of course, a more tragic matter.)

The most curious thing about the myth is the apathy with which it is viewed by anti-Semites. If anything, they are pleased to have a caricature of themselves to think about.

They feel secure enough to receive this sort of jibe, and perhaps are not disturbed even if they believe they have been accurately sketched. The American Puritan tradition is tenacious, and even a bigot is disposed to contemplate his sins (particularly those that seem to beget so little personal injury). Moreover, the bigot never forgets that it is his image of the Jew that controls the situation.

But there are Gentiles who *are* disturbed by the myth. Mostly they are those who have found it impossible to live after Hitler

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without an over-organized attitude toward Jews. This often culminates in a militant philo-Semitism: every Jew is a saint. The Gentile who subscribes to this idea is as ill-prepared to deal with the Myth-Gentile as any *voyeur* who finds himself observed: he feels betrayed, for does not his deep disapproval of anti-Semitism destroy the Jew's right to make him the subject of a myth?

Palpably, many Jews have been taken in by the *goy*-image; and it has genuinely distorted their relations with Gentiles. This in itself is uncomfortable, but the result is far more serious. For if one believes in a myth about others, how can one find the truth about oneself? And this is a hardship in an era when so many Jews are perplexed by the question of their own identity.

In Joyce's *Ulysses,* the Jewish Bloom seems to undertake a bit of this search. He asks Stephen Dedalus at one point whether he believes in the existence of the soul. Stephen says: "They tell me on the best authority it is a simple substance and therefore incorruptible." And Bloom replies: "Simple? I shouldn't think that is the proper word." Something very like two kinds of cultural tonalities are exposed with this. One longs to see an extension of the search outside art at the level of life.

TEACH US TO MARK THIS, GOD

FRANZ WERFEL

So long as you live and move,
And walk around in unpatched shoes,
So long—mark this, for it is true—
You'll not, head high and unafraid,
Know of what stuff the world is made.

But when your meals begin to fail,
The house squints odious and vile,
And—mark this well, for it is so—
Your body, plumpish and at ease,
Grows meager, mangy with disease,

Why, then the earth will be exchanged.
Another day shout in your brain,
Another light—mark it as threat—
Fall in your room, cold, biting-blue,
A bare light that belittles you.

Once you were worth your weight
in gold
To some; unwanted, now you pall.
And every eye that—mark this plain—
Once laughed fond welcome to your face
Will look away from your disgrace.

Each day expect another thrust!
Sir Fright-Inspired, Madame Love-Lost
Who now—mark this without hate—
The nasty urge's loyal crew,
Refuse to render you your due.

From early morning to midnight,
You act as one to be despised,
And this is—mark it quite right—
Of all your open, pussy sores,
The worst that ever clogged your pores.

Then you must learn to stand and walk
Like a child, to see, to talk
That—teach us to mark this, God—
Death may not on its unmasked slope
Take you without all soul, all hope.

Teach Us to Mark This, God (*"Lehrs uns zu merken Gott"*) was published in German, as one of a group, "Elf neue Gedichte," in the magazine *Mass und Wert,* July-August 1938. The translation printed here is by Jacob Sloan.

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THE FRENCH INTELLECTUAL MERRY-GO-ROUND

Right, Left, Up and Down

SHERRY MANGAN

THE postwar resumption of transatlantic cultural communications brought American Francophiles a series of surprises. It was soon discovered that André Malraux—who had moved across the whole political spectrum from Marxist revolutionary (*Man's Fate*) through Stalinist apologist (*Man's Hope*) to Bonapartist hack (tub-thumper in the Gaullist weekly *Rassemblement*)—was no biological sport. The whole cultural constellation was politically unrecognizable, dozens of pre-war "rightist" intellectuals turning up as "leftists" and vice versa and versa vice. Nor did the new Liberation period realignment stay put: with each twitch of history, the kaleidoscope has presented a new pattern. What is happening?

Unadmitted venality is that which the record of French writing, especially journalism, causes to spring quickest to anyone's mind. In France a writer usually starts young and ambitious at the extreme Left to end up old and successful at the extreme Right. And though recent sharp political reversals now make this progress a zig-zag rather than a straight line, material advantage, real or fancied, certainly explains a majority of cases. Nobody is a conscious villain, of course; rather, an alert writer can follow the Ariadne thread (invisible to the general public) of an inner integrity through vicissitudes that cause him, justifiably, to denigrate today precisely what he whitewashed yesterday. The hitch occurs when some rude fellow points to the curious coincidence that the subtle convolutions of that thread roughly parallel the rise and fall in political or economic power of the various ideological tendencies, or, with the Stalinists, the gyrations of the Kremlin weather vane.

A recent such spoil-sport is "Orion" (M. Jean Maze), who has assembled a damning confrontation of several decades' texts by France's more conspicuous political men of letters, in a murderous little work titled *Nouveau Dictionnaire des Girouettes,* the latest version of a scabrous and salutary compendium of the wondrous acrobatics of "principle" of some twelve hundred French public men originally published one hundred and thirty years ago.

Herein are confronted, for example, Paul Claudel's fulsome poetic eulogies, only three years apart, of Marshal Pétain and General de Gaulle. There is the whole gamut of Louis Aragon, from his earliest semi-surrealist anti-Communism, through his Communist period of super-revolutionary anti-patriotic poetry, the Resistance period of anti-revolutionary super-patriotic poetry, and so on to today's yellow journalism. François Mauriac, noted Catholic novelist and playwright, who in 1940 was declaiming *"Hé bien non!"* to General de Gaulle in a *Figaro* article beginning, "On June 17, after Marshal Pétain gave his country that supreme proof of love . . ." (the "gift of his person"), in 1944 reappears gushing ecstatically of the same De

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In 1934, a showing of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* in Paris resulted in a riot and street battle between the Right and Left. For the excitable French take their intellectuals seriously; and the mercurial French intellectuals take their politics even more seriously. In this article, Sherry Mangan discovers some pattern in the shifting allegiances and ideologies of leading members of the French intelligentsia in the present intense political struggle in that country. Mr. Mangan has lived in Paris since 1925, and served for over ten years as Paris correspondent for *Time*. In the early 30's, he helped edit a "little magazine," *Pagany,* which created something of a stir. His previous contributions to Commentary include: "Is De Gaulle Fascist?" (January 1948) and "Is Europe's Middle Class Finished?" (July 1948).

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Gaulle, "I can devour him with my eyes at leisure." *Et cetera ad nauseam.*

But less malicious examination shows that in many cases to explain these about-faces as prompted by immediate personal advantage is insufficient. Behind these paradoxical groupings, splits, regroupings, re-splits, and re-regroupings, must be sought more complex motivations of political choice.

FRENCH intellectuals have long been proud of their nonconformist independence, not only toward official opinion and power, but also toward all "schools" and "systems." If Anglo-Saxon thought is predominantly empirical, and German metaphysical, the typical French intellectual has for four centuries been the incorrigible individualist.

This attitude's negative side is not merely that it precludes a consistent system of reasoning, but that its aversion to "dogmatism," as it calls principle, gives exaggerated importance to external events, which become the decisive factor in determining political realignments. The tendency is reinforced by the French middle class's well-known longing for stability and security. The decisive event, which occurs about every decade, is thus sensed, not as an example confirming or modifying systematic thought, but as the hostile intrusion of an unforseen accident jarring comfortable ideas and forcing one to take a stand, *"une prise de position."*

Naturally, French intellectuals cannot all decide their positions on purely abstract grounds, since they do not live in an economic vacuum. Yet because there is in general a greater separation or insulation between their breadwinning occupations and their political sympathies and writings than in the United States, Britain, or Weimar Germany, they believe they can be more independent. Many are civil servants with permanent tenure (e.g., the diplomat Paul Claudel); others practice professions (e.g., the physicians Duhamel and Céline); others are simply *rentiers.* Even most of those who live by their pens do so non-politically; either by successful novels and plays, or by working as critics, reporters, or rewrite men, often anonymous, in "neutral" periodicals or press agencies. This strict separation of income from writing gives them the freedom to change at will the orientation and destination of their slanted articles and creative work. The exception is, naturally, the French Communist party, which tries, with varying success, to tie its fellow-travelers to itself by material means.

In the United States, Britain, and Weimar Germany, a sort of social-democratic liberalism created a whole framework of government, university, and school jobs, plus a well-paying left-of-center press, which enabled writers to integrate their thinking and their incomes. But France's social democratic current has had little appeal for writers, who have tended to split off further to the Left or Right.

In this tradition of independence, two main sub-currents can be discerned. The "subjectivist" attitude provokes writers, journalists, and critics suddenly to embrace "great causes," often contradictory to their previous ideas, but appealing to their conscience, imagination, or even Latin temperament—as when the Catholic novelist Bernanos sprang to join the Spanish Republicans. The "objectivist" attitude, less emotional but no less drastic, provokes literary men to risk their achieved success by supporting nonconformist minorities because their individualist ratiocinations suddenly "prove" to them that such groups are right against the "as always" wrong majority—as when numerous intellectuals between the wars rallied to either fascism or Stalinism.

The most decisive event of the last decade in France was obviously the 1940 defeat and its consequences: Occupation, Vichy, Resistance, etc. It provoked immediate and curious developments.

LET us examine first the rightists. They might equally justly be termed the Maurrasians, for since the beginning of the century it is a sad fact that, next to Marx, no other individual has influenced so large a sector of French youth as that once honest poet, Charles Maurras, and his sinisterly

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brilliant *Action Française*. The rightist intellectuals of the 30's—remember France, where fascism never took power, is significantly the only country where really talented writers like Céline, Brasillach, and Drieu La Rochelle, who made their living writing for mass-circulation weeklies, supported fascist movements—all proudly traced their ideological genealogy from Maurras.

Now Maurras's doctrine was an irrational hodge-podge of purely emotional political thinking. Militant nationalism was reinforced by a paranoiac hatred of Germany ("the hereditary enemy"). Tacked on were such diverse ideas as: Catholic royalism, hatred of the Republic ("la Gueuse" born of defeats), of Bonapartism (cause of defeats for one hundred years), and of Jews (because "alien" and "international"). This mixture was completed by violent hatred of parliamentarism (Parliament, the "legal country," contrasted with the Nation, the "real country"); glorification of war (as "an ideal field for the realization of all the virile qualities") and colonialism (in racist theories of the inferiority of colonial peoples).*

The year 1940 posed the Maurrasians a terrible dilemma. Occupation by the "hereditary enemy," "lost honor," and "moral prostration," and the German annexation of symbolic Alsace-Lorraine aroused their hostility to the Pétain regime, "product of the country's disgrace." General de Gaulle, himself formed in the Maurrasian school, reacted thus.

But on the other hand the abolition of the Republic, the army's and upper clergy's predominance in the new "French state," the replacement of liberalism's abhorred slogans by those truly Maurrasian keywords, *"Travail, Famille, Patrie,"* represented the sudden attainment of ends for which these same intellectuals had long striven. Maurras unhesitatingly saluted the armistice in 1940 with the cry, "Now we must achieve really great things." The chance to lead France "with its real elite" could not be passed up: Maurras, arch-nationalist and Boche-eater, became paradoxically the *eminence grise* of the German-protected Pétain regime; and many of his followers went along.

But as the war's tide turned, most Maurrasians broke with Vichy and many joined the Resistance. Typical was André Rousseaux, a literary critic, who first followed his master to the *Figaro* at Lyons, later joined the *maquis*, after the Liberation wrote for the Stalinoid *Lettres Françaises*, and, when Maurras was tried, did not hesitate to call for his head. Today, having swung full circle, Rousseaux—in the Gaullist *Rassemblement*—accuses the Socialists of betraying "true socialism." Characteristically he makes his living, however, writing for the non-Gaullist *Figaro Littéraire*.

At the political spectrum's other end, the repeated impact of external events drove the militant "integral"-pacifist intellectuals to a series of splits and realignments. When "war-loving" Hitler replaced "peace-loving" Weimar, those for whom anti-fascism outweighed pacifism split to become "bellicists." The rest, seeking "peace at any price," rallied in a strong fraction around the Socialist party's secretary, Paul Faure, and hailed Munich as a victory. The 1940 defeat again split them, driving some into the Resistance, while others—on genuinely ideological grounds—found themselves collaborationists, and surprised bedfellows of the Maurrasians. Jean Galtier-Boissière of the brilliant prewar *Crapouillot*, rallying point of pacifist intellectuals, reports in the malicious and informative journal he kept how an "integral" became secretary of the fascist *Matin's* editorial board, and how the fine novelist Jean Giono let a new novel run in the collaborationist *La Gerbe*. "A lack of tact," comments M. Galtier-Boissière.

THE Resistance was also an *omnium-gatherum* of odd bedfellows. The current Paris air is blue with mutual accusations of "betrayal of the Resistance." A recent ex-

*The Maurras tradition is not dead, or even underground. A newspaper, *Aspects de la France* (*A.F.*, like the *Action Française*), today openly defends the above articles of faith, claims Pétain's armistice saved the Allies, and charges "Jewry" with planning France's destruction by an invasion of Germany.

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pression is *Le Sacrifice du Matin,* the memoirs of General Guillain de Bénouville, a Gaullist who on joining the Resistance unhesitatingly accepted all other groupings therein. His sincere if naive book is mostly sad nostalgia for the days of "common sacrifice" before he realized that the Stalinists and others pursued quite different final aims.

If such writers as Colonel Rémy, chief of an Allied Resistance spy ring, and aviation-ace Closterman today bitterly complain of "betrayal," it is because their own motives—"to forge a new France" freed of the "weakness" of parliamentarism, the "rottenness" of political parties, "the tyranny of the trade unions," to restore France's "declining power in the international arena" (motives hardly different from those that led Maurras to choose Pétain's Vichy)—are still unrealized. Whereas many of those semi-revolutionary intellectuals surrounding the vanguard newspapers *Combat* and *Franc-Tireur* feel equally bitterly that De Gaulle and Company, whom they uncritically supported from 1940 on, have betrayed the Resistance, only because their quite opposed motives—hope for greater freedom, social justice, less power to capitalists, a press freed from the grip of the "money powers"—never seemed farther from realization. The Resistance slogans—"liberation," "renovation"—were empty vessels that each intellectual filled with his own ideological content: hence, inevitably, when liberation itself dissipated the so-called "common doctrine," each man was sent scurrying to a new compact with new allies.

THE *"équivoque,"* the contradiction within the Resistance, was further complicated by the fact that the Stalinist intellectuals in it were simultaneously, on the one hand, violent nationalists, tricolor defenders of "the strong state," a "strong army," and a "power ful country," and, on the other, violent reformists, radical advocates of political and social advances after "victory." Small wonder that naive Resistants felt indignant on discovering that the Stalinists sought neither a strong France nor reforms, but only the key positions in the state and economy.

Outside America, France has been *the* country where the CP's cynical *"politiques"* have shown the most astuteness in winning over emotional *"intellectuels"* who, ideologically anything but Marxists, could be counted on to take propaganda at face value. In the Popular Front and Resistance periods, the Stalinist line was neo-Jacobinism: militant nationalism leavened by a trace of "revolutionary Messianism," struggle against "the reaction" linked with vague promises of social justice—all in all, a line with a strong appeal for left-wing intellectuals wanting to serve some great "people's cause" and obsessed by the simplistic notion of "uniting all progressive elements" around such a historically outmoded program as "Jacobinism."

Their shrewd political shepherds, knowing their individualistic "independence," did not herd them tightly at first. They were permitted to be openly sceptical of "Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism" as doctrine, provided they showed enthusiasm for the Kremlin's power politics as clever "political realism."

A great many fellow-travelers have a secret disdain of the Marxist *Weltanschauung* as a complete system, or, as they would say, a "dogma." They "Westernize" and polish the rough-edged doctrine, seek French naturalization papers for it. This intellectual "elite" has always enjoyed tracing Marxism's genealogy back to Descartes, and its real labor of love, begun in 1945, is the drafting of a new *Encyclopédie Française,* on the model of D'Alembert and Diderot, Gallicizing Stalinism.

But its intellectuals' incurable individualism has finally begun to worry the French Communist party, whose central committee recently rumbled about "ideological party discipline," while *Humanité* started articles on "the duties of intellectuals, members of our party." Yet even a leading whip in this drive, the brilliant journalist Pierre Hervé, editorialist of the official Stalinist weekly *Action,* who has demonstrated his "discipline" by doing every kind of dirty job, cannot change his French skin. When recently assigned the task of presenting Zhdanov in *Action* as a philosopher, he theorized at

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length that men of action may express opinions on philosophy, but did not allude at all to Zhdanov's "contributions." Similarly, the biologist Marcel Prenant, asked in an open forum for his opinion of Lysenko's theories of genetics and Moscow's condemnation of Mendelianism, replied by reference to the condemnation of Darwinism in Tennessee, without mentioning Lysenko's innovations or underwriting the Stalinist upper synod's decision on biological faith and morals.

Stalinism has recruited and retained, not only debauched great talents like Aragon, or tedious hacks like Claude Morgan, but many unquestionably first-rate intellectuals: the philosophers Lefèvre and Politzer (killed by the Nazis), scholars and scientists such as Wallon, Prenant, the Joliot-Curies, and the late Paul Langevin; painters and poets like Picasso and Paul Éluard, and writers too innumerable to list. But the permanently faithful among these luminaries form only a minority of the fellow-travelers, most of whom are likely to break with a great deal of (literary) noise, at the next sharp turn. Part are usually wooed back by the zig-zag thereafter; but some maintain the rupture, as did the "revolutionary" Surrealists when, after the Stalin-Laval pact, French Stalinism began advocating national defense. The "Jacobins" similarly fell off when, with the Stalin-Hitler pact, French Stalinism reversed its field. That break was definitive with but few, among them the talented young novelist Paul Nizan, whose early death spared him the question of reconsideration. Most returned in 1941, including Albert Bayet, highly vocal president of the Fédération de la Presse Française, and the Joliot-Curies, who in 1939 had signed a manifesto attacking Stalinist policy. Stalinist heroism in the Resistance naturally brought a heavy new crop of young intellectuals. Another attraction may have been the fact that the French Communist party publishes or secretly controls, in Paris alone, three dailies, a score of weeklies, and a dozen monthlies—not to count innumerable regional, trade-union, party, and crypto-party publications.

Since the Liberation, however, a new series of external events—the revelation of Stalinism's policy in France, with its cynical denial of everything the Communizing workers and intellectuals had thought they were fighting for, plus the barbarism of Stalinist activity in Eastern Europe—has caused further shifts among emotional intellectuals.

OUTSTANDING in this category, though with special motives, is André Malraux, a great novelist and a powerful influence. Malraux has always been less an opportunist than (in both the good and bad sense) an adventurer. He became a Communist sympathizer through neither human sympathy with the oppressed nor convictions of Communism's desirability or likelihood, but rather because only the revolutionary movement could satisfy his thirst for intense activity. A study in the *Revue de Paris* once convincingly explained the unconscious origins of his passion for activism by his psychic relationship with death, illustrated by the desire of his novels' heroes to leave after their deaths "some scars on the earth that will not disappear."

Malraux's late break with Stalinism was no explosion of moral indignation, for which there had been ample occasions previously. Witness his whitewashing of Stalinist policy in Spain in *Man's Hope*, and his refusal to testify even on a straight point of fact during the Moscow Trials. Once he recognized the limitations that Stalinism's totalitarian controls imposed on him as a heroic individualist, Gaullism represented merely a more adventurous field of "intensified activity."

Malraux cannot bear to explain his shift as correction of a previous error, but tries to pretend that it is not he, but the political world, which has been turned upside down in the past fifteen years. His uneasy conscience makes him present his support of authoritarian Gaullism as a fight for freedom against totalitarianism. In his dialogue with James Burnham in *Partisan Review* of April 1948, he alleges that De Gaulle's Rassemblement Populaire Française is considered rightist only because of fiendish

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Stalinist propaganda, ignoring the plain fact that all French reaction is clustering round it. In another speech he grotesquely claims that only complete liberty can guarantee artistic flowering and only the authoritarian state can guarantee such liberty. Malraux's rationalizing acrobatics are a particularly French type of Old Hegelianism.

WE HAVE seen how emotional integral-pacifists and integral-nationalists bedded together under Vichy; while democratic patriots, hastening to pan-Slavic Stalinism, crossed en route former fellow-travelers speeding to reactionary Gaullism. It is time to glance at the "objectivists."

If the French "subjectivist" is an embracer of "great causes," the "objectivist" is a destroyer of "false idols." Both are fundamentally sceptics; but the latter is sceptical even toward his own enthusiasms: his badge is an ironic smile; he is "tough." The most recent examples are the editors of the late Marxist *Revue Internationale* and a fraction from the vanguard daily *Franc-Tireur,* who, while embracing Stalinism as the only "realist" alternative to "renascent fascism" (as they consider Gaullism), destroy any "illusions" by a "liberal anti-Stalinism" which still permits them to write what they like.

Those "objectivists" who chose Vichy did so, not from emotions about the victor of Verdun or Franco-German friendship, but from calculation about the chances of war and the optimum position of France (and of its intellectuals' privileges) thereafter. Gaston Bergery, for instance, once *enfant terrible* of French Communism, one of the brightest minds in the pre-war parliament, frankly explained his adherence to Vichy thus: "Roosevelt having refused to answer positively Reynaud's appeal, Russia being allied to Germany, and Britain exposed to imminent invasion, logic could conclude only that France did not at that moment dispose of forces enabling it not to accept the German conditions of armistice." History has proved that the "realistic" Bergery saw with great clarity exactly as far as the end of his nose.

The perfect example of "rational" weathercock is Alfred Fabre-Luce, who is about the only unrepentant fascist writer openly daring to practice in postwar Europe. In a series of books illegally* and legally published since the Liberation, he continues to profess that internally consistent class realism which, backed by his wealth and connections, released him from jail, first under the Gestapo, then under the FFI, and finally from the Provisional Government's dubious regime of "administrative internment." The line of this saucy *grand seigneur* of French fascism is that sentimental patriotism is silly in an age of power politics, and that Resistance policy was emotional in the historical context—i.e., it took less moral courage in 1942 to throw a bomb into a German barracks, insuring death for fifty French hostages, than to temporize with the occupying powers to save millions of Frenchmen from being drafted or deported.

Like the devil quoting scripture, Fabre-Luce does a devastating job of debunking his opponents. But his real tactic is painfully obvious, "sewn with basting-thread." Even while Fabre-Luce and his fellows were denouncing the "malignity" of the "usurper" De Gaulle, they were already quietly preparing a politically logical realignment behind the "Republican" banner of his RPF. Fabre-Luce's recent defense of Pétainism has now become classic: that France needed both Allies-backed De Gaulle as a sword and German-backed Pétain as a shield.

GENERAL DE GAULLE will naturally be ready when the moment comes. True, the recent movement for Pétain's release from the Ile d'Yeu found him opposed—for public consumption. But his real opinion appears in a significant (and significantly undenied) section from his semi-official biography, *De Gaulle, cet inconnu,* by his

*Cynical fascist though he is, a certain courage cannot be denied to Fabre-Luce, imperturbably publishing at a moment when the almost daily execution of "*kollabo*" journalists was scaring even high-riding Resistance writers with the realization that the world had gone a long way since the whole international literary world had protested against the imprisonment of Aragon for an anti-military poem.

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intimate, Colonel Rémy: "I regret not having noted down the conversation in detail, but I believe I do not falsify the thought of my illustrious interlocutor in this resumé: the Armistice being signed, and our country placed before a *fait accompli,* it was not a bad thing for France to have two strings to its bow, one played by De Gaulle, the other by Pétain, it being understood that they both had to be in tune with the exclusive profit of the Nation."

The supposed extremes are thus preparing to meet. General de Gaulle, still publicly opposing "reconciliation" in order to appeal to the Resistance tradition, lets it be understood that he sees collaborationism in its "true," i.e., patriotic, light, thus rallying ex-Pétainists for his anti-democratic struggle.

Malraux, with his "great new issue," and Fabre-Luce, with his cynical understanding, rally readily to what is essentially Gaullism's doctrine, though not yet formulated: for France to flourish, a strong state with re-established authority must place the nation's general interests above those of any group or class. This Bonapartist demagogy is not new: compare Hitler's *"Gemeinnutz geht vor Eigennutz."* But there are more specific Gaullist articles of faith that also please Malraux and the Pétainists: elimination of all Communists from political life, restoration of France's grip on the colonies (the author of *Man's Fate* now calls this the only alternative to chaos), a strong army, annulment of the nationalizations of industry, etc., etc.

The motives of these recruits are obvious. But Gaullism also attracts "realist" leftist intellectuals for whom politics has become only the recurring choice of the lesser evil. Such people love to prove they have no "illusions" left, and, like Arthur Koestler, salve their consciences by publicly admitting all the faults of the camp they join. Among them are the ex-leaders of the newspaper *Combat,* notably Albert Ollivier and Pascal Pia, who now edit the RPF organ *Rassemblement.* These liberal humanitarians, fearing Stalinism as the greater evil, consider the "third force" too feeble a bulwark. They hope that by getting in on the ground floor they will keep the RPF from growing too authoritarian and perhaps give the movement a leftist twist before General de Gaulle crystallizes into a complete reactionary. They do not hesitate to declare themselves (probably to the secret amusement—if he is capable of being amused—of the General himself) the true heirs of Robespierre and Saint-Just, to proclaim the 1848 Republic as the "truly French state" they want to reestablish, to enthuse about the 1871 Commune "which united the urge for national liberation and social justice just as the Resistance did," and to stand as disciples of Proudhon's "French socialism" as against "foreign-born Marxist dogmatism." Their demagogy can combine in one issue of their paper a commemorative article on Jaurès and an editorial demanding destruction of German unity. Their leading spokesman, Raymond Aron, recently tried to demonstrate in his new book *Le Grand Schisme* how Stalinism (representing electorally one-third of the nation) can be eliminated from public life without endangering civil liberties.

Are they justified in concluding, as did James Burnham in his dialogue with Malraux, that Gaullism "has not yet crystallized" and that "it is impossible as yet to define it because it is still in the process of defining itself"? Of course not; and Burnham knows better. If they are sincere, those French intellectuals whose fear of Stalinism blinds them now to the real nature of Gaullism will soon be driven into either Burnhamesque cynicism or still another pirouette.

A SIMILAR choice faced one group of intellectuals long before the RPF dreamed of seizing power: the centrist Catholics. They followed the General unhesitatingly till in 1946 he turned against "tri-partism" (hence against their MRP) and proposed his own constitution. They had to choose between their party and their hero.

Many Catholic intellectuals swam with the then anti-Gaullist tide. But the MRP, clinging to power, became discredited; the Right-Center circles to whom Mauriac and his associates speak wanted "an end to the

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comedy" that was destroying "the state's authority"; repeated social and economic crises were causing governmental instability. Now, with the MRP likely to lose half its strength at the next Assembly elections, Schuman and Mauriac seem to have bet on the wrong horse: time to realign.

But to get back to the General is not easy for such guilt-ridden Catholic intellectuals. The "early" Gaullists keep pounding them as "apostates." Since they asserted their choice was a matter of "principle," it is difficult today to reverse it without opening themselves to the charge of opportunism. Thus they must await an external event that will enable them to claim that "the objective situation has changed." It won't be long.

Whereas the Catholic sub-current of Schuman, Mauriac, and the *Figaro* academicians (Siegfried, Tharaud, *et al.*) saw in the MRP a rallying point for "moderates," another group of Catholic Left-Center democrats took the MRP's leftish doctrine at its face value. Its best representatives have for fifteen years been grouped round the excellent monthly *Esprit,* edited by the able Emmanuel Mounier. The *Esprit* group worked out a rational doctrine of Christian humanitarianism that included fighting for social justice and defending human rights against numerous tyrannies (including that of the state). During the Resistance, they startled many observers by turning up close to Stalinism.* Today the *Esprit* group, having broken with both the MRP and Stalinism, is engaged in an interesting effort to "re-think" some political fundamentals. The "socialist" content of its philosophy and its passionate defense of civil rights, clashing with Gaullism's aims, caused it to face the RPF challenge unhesitatingly. Disappointed with the MRP's hopeless conservatism, *Esprit,* together with other Catholic left-wingers, has now joined Sartre's and Rousset's Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire, where it hopes to achieve a synthesis "between personalism and Marxism."

THE main axis along which realignments are being made in France today is, of course, the question of Stalinism, which is gradually polarizing intellectuals around either Stalinism or Gaullism. But some, still refusing to be trapped into the "lesser evil," have reached a temporary habitation in the RDR, a curious well-meaning mixture of left-wing Catholic, left-wing Socialist, ex-Trotskyist, Existentialist, and independent intellectuals.

There is that part of the *Combat* group which refuses to accept Gaullism as the only "reasonable" alternative to Stalinism; that part of the *Franc-Tireur* group which refuses to consider Stalinism the only "realist" opposition to Gaullism. There are the principal writers in Sartre's magazine, *Les Temps Modernes.*

At one extreme is David Rousset, brilliant author of *L'Univers concentrationnaire* and *Les Jours de notre mort.* A product of orthodox Marxism, he became temporarily Stalinoid, but has in the last year broken away. He tries to maintain a generally Marxist viewpoint, at least a historical and sociological perspective. He believes only socialism can emancipate the individual. Far from considering the world as absurd and its driving forces as blind and uncontrollable, he tries to subject them to critical analysis.

How far in the other direction can the RDR go in all-inclusiveness? As far as Albert Camus, in the opinion of RDR leader Jean-Paul Sartre. Camus, talented novelist, playwright, and essayist, broke not only with Stalinism but with Marxism and its historical and sociological *Weltanschauung.* In his best-seller *The Plague* he illustrates his underlying idea that in an absurd world where blind uncontrollable forces destroy man's individuality, we must, without the crutch

*So close that parallel groups within the MRP later constituted a crypto-Stalinist Union des Chrétiens Progressistes. This formation has persisted, and so disturbed the hierarchy that at the beginning of February Cardinal Suhard publicly warned the Catholics in it that they were on a dangerous path. Even after the break with Stalinism, *Esprit's* attitude remains naive, scolding the Stalinists for a lack of "ideological sincerity" and advising them what changes in policy would enable them to emerge from the "isolation" and "distrust" surrounding them.

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of religion, reduce our fellow-men's misery as a step back to individualism as a social morale. His ambition is to be the "bad conscience of Communism in the same way that Communism was the bad conscience of the 19th-century liberals."

If the RDR were a political party, its lack of ideological homogeneity would soon blow it up: in politics, a *positive* program is essential. But in a looser grouping of less defined political character, the RDR founders feel, it suffices to agree on certain negative objectives. These they have defined as the prevention of two things: a totalitarian state, and France's involvement in either of the international blocs moving toward a third world war.

One of their recent activities consisted of backing and propagandizing the well-meaning efforts of Garry Davis, the young American who abandoned US citizenship and declared himself "a citizen of the world." It was mostly RDR journalists and publicists who organized the startlingly big meetings at the Salle Pleyel and Vélodrome d'Hiver, and the weekly two-page supplement in *Combat*. But their support of the symbolic and touching little man who is naively fighting for world peace contains the same scepticism they show toward any political action. If the RDR backs Garry Davis, it is because it feels that his followers are the same kind of people as themselves: unable to get agreement *for* anything specific, they all feel strongly about what they, and the "integral"-pacifists, are *against*.

They claim to be motivated neither by subjective hope nor by the objective probability of success. Indeed, one reason they refuse to constitute a political party is that they believe it neither possible nor advisable to speak with the dogmatism and fanaticism for which the Stalinists are notorious. For they consider Stalinism not an enemy political organization to be destroyed, but a moral illness of the labor movement, symptom of a deeper illness of humanity, curable only by fundamentally different methods. Thus certain RDR spokesmen do not even claim they will succeed, but feel that the only thing to do is struggle along the chosen road independently of results.

Yet there is a political pragmatism in RDR doctrine not unlike that of the other *rassemblement*. Certain RDR leaders want a programmatic framework broad enough to include the maximum number of people disgusted with traditional parties yet opposed to Gaullist authoritarianism. There is here a basic contradiction between a pragmatic desire for "an effective change in the balance of power, achieved as soon as possible," and the movement's organizational non-political idealism. The first attitude is best expressed by Rousset (*Les Temps Modernes*, July 1948); the second by Sartre (Paris *New York Herald-Tribune*, June 2, 1948). Future events will probably divide its component intellectuals—probably around the choice between political efficiency and moral guarantees—and send them off to new movements. Indeed, at the recent rally held in opposition to the Paris Communist-sponsored "peace conference," the RDR showed definite signs of splitting at the seams.

All intellectual France thus seems to be engaged in a sort of mass puss-in-the corner. Will it continue? Well, as long as French intellectuals maintain their incorrigible individualism and contempt of systematic thought, as long as their hatred of mental discipline and love of brilliant improvisation leave them at the mercy of unforeseen external events that morally require them "to take a position," it is hard to see what is to stop them.

Three general trends, however, can be discerned: the polarizations around Stalinism and Gaullism, and the first beginnings of a third, revolutionary tendency, of which the RDR is the groping and naive forerunner. The politico-literary kaleidoscope should settle gradually to that roughly tripartite pattern. But on the day that it is no longer disrupted suddenly by a handful of intellectuals, brandishing a manifesto, marching off from one group to another, France will have ceased to be France.

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THE RE-CREATION OF HEBREW

A "Dead Language" Lives Again

RALPH WEIMAN

IN a sense the most amazing feat of Zionism has been the revival of Hebrew, even more remarkable, perhaps, than such more frequently cited achievements as the transformation of the sand dunes near Jaffa into that bustling modern city, Tel Aviv. It is a linguistic miracle. For apart from Hebrew, we have no example of a "dead" language which ceased to be spoken and was again restored to life.

If a linguistic expert had been asked whether Hebrew could be revived, he probably would have replied that it was highly unlikely. From what we know about the history of language it is evident that once a language ceases to be spoken as an everyday language it either disappears completely or else continues solely as a written language. In popular terms, it "dies." In some cases dead languages have continued to be used in religious services: we have quite a few liturgical languages, such as Latin in the Catholic Church, Old Bulgarian in the Russian Orthodox Church, Aramaic in portions of the Jewish liturgy, and Geez in the Ethiopic Church. There are also a few cases in which a dead language has been maintained as a spoken language by a small group: an example is the use of Latin by many Catholic priests.

To realize just how difficult it is to revive a dead language we have only to consider how hard it is to keep a dying language alive. The government of Eire has made every effort to encourage the use of Gaelic: its study is compulsory in the schools (teachers must be able to speak it in order to qualify for positions) and societies have been founded to foster its development. But despite all efforts, Gaelic is still rapidly giving way to English and survives as an everyday language only in certain of the country districts.

Some Hebrew scholars hold that it is not accurate to speak of Hebrew as having been "revived," since, they maintain, it never ceased to be spoken. It was used, they point out, throughout the centuries by all Jews in their prayers and by rabbis and Talmudic scholars in their religious and legal discussions. But there is a great difference between a religious or learned language used by a small group and a vernacular language, that is, one used by a whole people in its everyday affairs. Latin during the Middle Ages was also used in religious services and was written (and to some extent even spoken) by scholars, but medieval Latin was never a vernacular in the sense that French, Italian, or Spanish were during that period. We can better realize what an accomplishment the revival of Hebrew represents if we try to conceive of a group of enthusiasts deciding to use the Latin of the classical and medieval authors in their daily life.

THE revival of modern Hebrew—the language of the new state of Israel—has been a continuing source of amazement to linguists and laymen alike. How was the "dead" language of the Bible suited to all the needs of modern industrial and urban civilization? RALPH WEIMAN is preeminently qualified to report on this achievement: he was for four years chief of the language section of the United States War Department, which prepared foreign language guides for American soldiers. He is editor of the "Living Language Series," served on the editorial advisory boards of *American Speech* and *Word*, and on the editorial board of the *American College Dictionary*, and is consultant to the International Auxiliary Language Association. He was born in Philadelphia in 1916 and took his undergraduate work and master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania. His doctoral dissertation at Columbia was on the linguistic structure of modern spoken Hebrew.

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We are not entirely certain when Hebrew ceased to be spoken, but it was probably some time towards the end of the 2nd century BCE. About that time Aramaic, which had spread over most of the Near East, supplanted Hebrew as the colloquial language of Palestine. Hebrew continued, however, as the language of religion and law. During the Middle Ages it was used, in addition, in philosophy and poetry, and in correspondence as well. It enabled Jews living in different countries to communicate with one another and accordingly served as a sort of early "international auxiliary language."

IF THE revival of a dead language is so nearly impossible, what accounts for the success of the Hebrew revival? The explanation probably lies in the fact that in the case of Hebrew there was a rather special combination of psychological and practical factors. The Jew has always had an unusually strong attachment to Hebrew as the language of the Bible and of his religious life. Hebrew has been for him not merely another language but a "sacred language." As the language spoken by the Jews when they were an independent nation in their own land, it has had a powerful symbolic value. It was natural therefore that the early Zionists should feel that Hebrew had to be revived as a national language before the Jews could hope to create a new national life in Palestine. To make Hebrew a living language, not only a strong emotional attachment was required, but an unusual degree of enthusiasm, amounting almost to fanaticism.

To understand something of the strength of the impulse behind the Hebrew revival, one has only to read the biography of Eliezer Ben Yehuda (1857-1922).* "One day, out of a clear blue sky, he began to speak to his wife in Hebrew, though she did not understand a word of our national language. She looked at him in astonishment and when she finally understood his intention explained to him in Russian that though she desired with all her heart to learn to speak Hebrew, she could not very well suddenly become transformed into a mute, that after all one has to learn a new language step by step. But he stubbornly kept to his resolve and in a year Hebrew resounded in the Ben Yehuda household. But still not satisfied, Ben Yehuda and his wife Deborah decided to talk only Hebrew to their friends as well. A few years later Deborah Ben Yehuda began to teach Hebrew in one of the schools in Jerusalem." Ben Yehuda also founded several Hebrew periodicals and compiled a Hebrew dictionary which in method and scope approaches the Oxford English Dictionary (an enterprise that represents the collaboration of scores of scholars working over half a century).

There was also a practical aspect. The Jews who came to Palestine in the 80's and 90's of the last century spoke many different languages. There were Russian, Galician, and Hungarian Jews who spoke Yiddish; Sephardic Jews who spoke Ladino; Yemenite and Moroccan Jews who spoke Arabic; Iranian Jews who spoke Persian, etc. A common language was needed not only to facilitate communication among the different groups but also to make possible the organization of a unified educational system and the welding of the various Jewish entities into a homogeneous nation.

AMONG the linguistic factors that made the revival of Hebrew possible, two are of particular importance: the existence of a common literary source and the bilingualism (and even multilingualism) of so many Jews. In order to revive Hebrew as a spoken language there had to be a source familiar to all Jews from which the everyday vocabulary could be drawn. The Bible, the Mishnaic and medieval literature, and the Prayer Book served as this source. Modern Hebrew is basically Biblical Hebrew with certain modifications found in Mishnaic Hebrew (e.g., the development of a

* *A Short History of Modern Hebrew Literature*, by Joseph Klausner. Klausner's book is in Hebrew, but a good account of Ben Yehuda in English can be found in Shalom Spiegel's *Hebrew Reborn*.

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present tense, the less frequent use of the possessive suffixes, the more frequent use of the "shel" form rather than the "construct state," the loss or less frequent use of certain verb forms and the development of one or two new ones, etc.), and a number of further modifications and simplifications (especially in the syntax and in the tense system) which represent the influence of the Western European languages.

The fact that so many Jews knew European languages enabled them to borrow necessary new words and to coin Hebrew words on the model of foreign ones. Many of the foreign borrowings are international words like radio, telephone, telegram, etc.; many are words common to a number of European languages (prose, poem, drama, opera, satire, civilization, reform, university, etc.). The proportion of foreign words in Hebrew is much higher than that found in most other languages. It is not uncommon to hear a conversation or read a newspaper article in which twenty per cent or more of the words are borrowings. A Hebrew speaker will not hesitate to use practically any foreign word which seems to him to express an idea more precisely than a Hebrew word at his command. The first few pages of a recent issue of a newspaper contained the following foreign words (given for convenience in their English form): coalition, solidarity, interests, caricature, inquisition, bourgeois, prestige, standard, imperialistic, indiscretion, differentiation, dynamic, lexicographic, veto, sanctions, neutrality, status quo, proportion, sensation. Loan words usually appear in their German (or, in a few cases, their Russian) form: *kurs* "course" (*u* pronounced as in "rule"), *kontsert* "concert" (*o* as in "orb," *e* as in "let"), *paritet* "parity" (*a* as in "father," *i* as in "machine"), *luksus* "luxury," *egoismus* "egoism," *musika* "music," *proportsiya* "proportion," *reaktsiya* "reaction." Very often a Hebrew suffix (especially *-ut* "abstract meaning" and *-i* "adjectival ending") is added to a foreign word: *realiut* "realism," *humaniut* "humanity," *moderni* "modern," *eropi* "European." At times one finds rather bizaare blends like *tankai, jeepai,* and *sportai* (the suffix *-ai* "one having to do with" added to "tank," "jeep," and "sport").

HEBREW has always borrowed from the most diverse sources. In its early period it borrowed from Aramaic, Persian, Greek, and Latin. Since the time it was revived it has borrowed from Yiddish, German, Russian, English, Arabic, French, Italian, etc. In Palestine it has been in direct contact with two other languages, namely, Arabic and English. Many of the names of local plants and animals and of various kinds of foods are Arabic (as are, by the way, many slang terms). Among the English borrowings are words like sport, film, toast, sweater, pudding, hello (in answering the telephone), OK, and a number of military terms like tank, jeep, bunker, pillbox, etc. One frequently sees letters in the Haganah magazine *BaMachane* ("In Camp") criticizing soldiers for using such words as OK, pass, camp, sick report, and suggesting Hebrew words that might be used instead.

Side by side with this wide freedom to borrow, there exists in Hebrew a very marked puristic tendency. Hebrew has a very patterned structure: most words are made up of a root (usually consisting of three consonants) which carries the basic meaning, and a vowel or vowel-consonant pattern which expresses a certain modification of the root idea. Thus we have the root *l m d* which means "having to do with studying or learning" and forms like *lmida* "the act of learning or studying," *limed* "he taught," *limud* "teaching, learning, study," *talmud* "learning, study," *mlamed* "a teacher," *mlumad* "learned," *lamdan* "a learned man, scholar." Since most Hebrew words consist of such fixed patterns, words which lack these patterns are easily recognized as foreign. The English speaker is not aware that many of the common words he uses were originally loan words: while "lane" and "sweet," for example, are native words (that is, Anglo-Saxon or Germanic in origin), "street" and "nice" are foreign words (in this case, words of Latin origin). The

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Hebrew speaker, however, can usually tell from the form of most words whether they are native or borrowed; and there is a very strong tendency to replace foreign words by Hebrew words wherever possible. Foreign words are avoided in formal or literary stlye, and speaking and writing a "good Hebrew" implies, among other things, the use of a very high proportion of native words.

This tendency to replace borrowings with native coinages exists even in the everyday vocabulary. The word "telegram," for instance, has been replaced by *mivrak* (from the word meaning "lightning"). Right now an attempt is being made to replace the word *teksi* ("taxi") by *monit* (from the root meaning "to count"), though a recent issue of a newspaper carries the story of a man who being in a hurry decided to hail a cab and shouted *monit* to an empty cab that was coming towards him. The driver, however, just continued on his way. Desperate situations calling for desperate remedies, the man cried *teksi,* whereupon the driver halted instantly. Yet, given the strong puristic tendency of Hebrew, the chances are good that it will very soon be possible (if it is not already) to hail a cab by shouting *monit.* Every year hundreds of foreign words are replaced by Hebrew words found in the earlier literature, or by new Hebrew coinages, or are simply translated into Hebrew. This process affects even proper names: on reaching Palestine, Mr. Fried becomes Ben-Shalom (Hebrew for "son of peace"), Mr. Schwartz becomes Shchori (Hebrew for "black"), Mr. Berg becomes Harari (Hebrew for "mountaineer"), and Mr. Wilder becomes Prai (Hebrew for "wild").

HEBREW has enriched its vocabulary in several different ways. First of all, many Biblical words have been given new meanings. The word *chashmal* occurs three times in Ezekiel and apparently refers to some sort of shining substance. It was translated in the Septuagint by the Greek word for "amber," *elektron,* from which our word "electricity" is derived. The word *chashmal* has been adopted in modern Hebrew for "electricity" and from it various Hebrew formations have been made (*chashmali* "electric or electrical," *chashmalai* "electrician," *chishmul* "electrification," *chashmalit* "street car run by electricity").

Second, many Biblical or Mishnaic words have been given extended meanings on the basis of the European languages. The word *sh'ifa* (the apostrophe represents the vowel *shva* which is pronounced like the *i* in "mistake"), meaning "breathing," has been extended to mean "aspiration." The word *zerem,* "stream or current," has been extended to cover meanings like "stream of history" or "electric current." The word *sviva,* which means "neighborhood or environment" (in the physical sense), has been extended to mean "cultural environment, milieu." The word *matsav,* which means "standing place, station, position," has been extended to mean "situation or status." The word *tnua,* which means "movement" (in the physical sense), has been extended to include "social or cultural movement." The word *mate,* which means "staff or rod," has been extended to mean "army staff." In a few cases a Hebrew word which happened to sound like a European word has been given the meaning of the European word it resembles. The Hebrew word *mchona* originally meant only "fixed place, base, stand" but has been given the additional meaning "machine" on the basis of words like German *Maschine, Mechanik,* and similar words in other languages. The word *mapa* (from Latin *mappa* "napkin") which originally meant only "cloth" or "napkin," is now used in the sense of "map" as well. The word *masa* which meant only "burden, load" is now also used in the sense of "mass" (as in physics).

Third, foreign words have been borrowed where there was no Hebrew word for a given object or concept, or at least no Hebrew word which was specific enough. These loan words consist of concrete nouns like *telefon, radio, bank, oto* ("auto"), *bus, album, sigariya* ("cigarette"), etc., and abstract nouns like *humor, tempo, minimum,*

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maksimum, energiya, etc. The names of most of the arts and sciences (music, drama, history, geography, mathematics, physics, algebra, psychology, etc.), have been borrowed in their German or Russian form. A good many adjectives have also been borrowed (usually with the addition of the Hebrew adjectival suffix *-i*): *sotsiali* ("social"), *liberali* ("liberal"), *humani* ("human"), *obyektivi* ("objective"). On the other hand, only a handful of verbs have been borrowed (the common ones are those for telephoning, typewriting, organizing, citing, and declaiming).

Fourth, many Hebrew words have been coined on the pattern of foreign words. "Airplane" becomes *aviron* from *avir* "air" (an early borrowing from Greek, from which our English word "air" also comes) plus the Hebrew suffix *-on*. "Periodical" is *iton* from *et* "time" plus *-on*. "Weekly" (periodical) is *shavuon* from *shavua* "week" plus *-on*. For the words "export" and "import" Bialik coined the words *y'tsu* (from the root meaning "to go out") and *y'vu* (from the root meaning "to come"). The structure of Hebrew readily lends itself to this process of coinage. As we have seen, most Hebrew words are analyzable into roots carrying certain conceptual meanings and noun, adjective, and verb patterns with certain semantic and grammatical values. As soon as one recognizes the root and the pattern, one can guess the meaning of new coinages. Thus the Hebrew reader who comes across a very recent coinage like *mishlat* knows that the root *sh l t* has to do with "ruling or controlling" and that one of the commonest meanings for the prefix *ma-* or *mi-* is "a place where" or "a place which." *Mishlat* therefore has the general meaning of a "place which controls" and, since the context is a military one, he can guess that it means a place which puts one in a controlling or commanding position, that is, a military strong point, a fortified position, etc.

Finally, foreign words or phrases are translated into Hebrew. "Wireless" becomes *al chut* ("without wire"), "kindergarten" becomes *gan y'ladim* ("garden of children"), etc. Expressions like "point of view," "Weltanschauung," "fait accompli," for example, are just translated literally (*nkudat r'ut, hashkafat olam, uvda mugmeret*). Loan translations of this sort are extremely common in Hebrew.

These various methods make it possible to create at need a whole new terminology. Every year there appear technical monographs and textbooks in such fields as mathematics, medicine, physics, phonetics, ethnology, electrical engineering, etc., and the authors often have to create a Hebrew terminology as they go along. The Vaad HaLashon ("Language Committee") issues from time to time terminological glossaries and dictionaries in the arts, various fields of pure and applied science, mathematics, philosophy, etc. An example of the creation of an entirely new terminology in the course of less than a year has been in the field of military organization and tactics. When military training on a mass scale first began just about a year ago the terms used were mostly English. Hebrew terms were gradually substituted for the English ones, and now there is a Hebrew word for practically everything military: column right, present arms, hand grenades, commando units, engineer corps, mess call.

Many Biblical and Mishnaic words were given new meanings or specific modern applications. For example, there are several words in the Bible with the root *p r z* which refer to unfortified towns or to open (and hence undefendable) regions; the root is now used for a number of formations which refer to "open cities," "demilitarized regions," "neutral zones," etc. The Mishnaic word *pagoz* which refers to a projectile shot from a catapult has given rise to formations like *pagaz* "mortar shell," *l'hafgiz* "to subject to mortar fire," etc. Many foreign words or phrases have been translated into Hebrew: a caterpillar tank or tractor, for instance, is *zachal* (the Hebrew word for "caterpillar") and phrases like "flank attack," "pincers movement," "dive bomber," etc., are translated literally.

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HEBREW is of considerable interest from a purely linguistic standpoint. For one thing, it exhibits a remarkable continuity. The English reader who picks up a book written three centuries ago finds a quite different language; if he goes back seven or eight centuries the language becomes unintelligible to him. Yet the Hebrew speaker can turn from his evening paper to the Bible, portions of which were written some three thousand years ago, and feel that he is reading the same language.

A second interesting characteristic of modern Hebrew is that it is still in a formative state, particularly as regards vocabulary. We no longer have the freedom in formal or literary English or French to coin words at will. In the case of English we have to go back to the Elizabethan period to find a time when foreign borrowings and new coinages were welcomed and readily became part of the language. In Hebrew each issue of a newspaper or magazine is likely to contain many new words, and every year countless loan words and native coinages are added to the word stock of the language. The important Hebrew writers have enriched not only the literature but the language as well. A whole dictionary has been compiled of the innovations introduced by one man alone (*A Dictionary of Bialik's Coinages* by Isaac Avineri).

A third characteristic of Modern Hebrew is its homogeneity. Languages like English, French, Spanish, or German show a high degree of regional and social differentiation. The trained observer can listen for a few minutes to a Britisher or Frenchman and from various features of his pronunciation and usage tell what region he is from and exactly what his social status is. Hebrew, however, has no regional differentiation and very little social differentiation. There are, to be sure, a number of variations in Hebrew pronunciation in Israel. Some speakers use a "front *r*" similar to the Italian or Spanish *r*, while other speakers use a "back *r*" similar to the French or German *r* used in the cities. Some speakers use the vowel in "let" in cases in which other speakers use the vowel in "they." Many Sephardic speakers who know Arabic pronounce certain sounds (*alef* and *ayin*) which are not pronounced by other speakers or make distinctions (as between *chaf* and *chet*) which other speakers do not. Similarly in grammar, some speakers use forms and constructions (e.g. the form *katávtem* instead of *ktavtém*, etc.), which are considered "incorrect" by other speakers. But these variations are not nearly as numerous in Hebrew as they are, for example, in English or French, nor is there a "standard" and "substandard" language to correspond to standard British as contrasted with cockney English (or other substandard forms) or standard French as contrasted with substandard French.

MODERN Israeli Hebrew thus offers a unique opportunity to the linguistic scientist. Here he can study various phases of linguistic evolution, such as the development of social norms in a language (the emergence of standard and substandard forms), the development of different levels of usage (formal, informal, etc.), the growth of a children's language, of a slang vocabulary, of professional jargons, etc. In short, we have in Palestine what might be described as a linguistic laboratory situation: we can watch a language evolve, as it were, before our very eyes.

Two questions often asked about Hebrew are: "Is it a difficult language to learn?" and "Is it as fully developed a language as, say, English or French?"

One who is confronted with the Hebrew alphabet for the first time doubtless receives the impression that Hebrew presents a thorny problem, indeed, an impression likely to be strengthened when he learns that except for poetry, children's books, and beginners' texts Hebrew is generally written without vowels (or, more accurately, without any indication of some of the vowels and without an exact indication of the others) and that consequently there are sometimes sentences which can be interpreted in several ways, depending on the vowels the reader supplies.

Hebrew is without doubt a rather hard

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language to learn to read: it requires mastering a new alphabet (though, curiously enough, our Roman alphabet is ultimately derived from the Semitic one) and it means learning a good bit of the language before one can read unvocalized texts with ease. But to compensate for this difficulty, Hebrew is an easy language to learn to speak. It is a far easier language for English speakers to pronounce than French or German. We have all the Hebrew vowels in English and all the consonants except the *ch* sound (which is like the *ch* in Scottish *loch* or German *ach*) and the particular varieties of *r* used in Hebrew. Moreover, the accentual and intonational pattern of Hebrew and English is very similar, as is the grammatical system (both languages lack a case system and in both word order plays an important role). The tense system of Hebrew could not be simpler: there are only three tenses, past, present, and future. Building up a Hebrew vocabulary is somewhat difficult because of the absence of cognates, but on the other hand once one has learned the meaning of the common roots and the common noun, adjective, and verb patterns, one can guess the meaning of many of the new words one encounters.

As for the potentialities of Hebrew, one sometimes reads that Hebrew is a language ideally suited to poetry because of its "conciseness and vividness," but one not suited to the writings of novels or scientific treatises.

Hebrew does, as a matter of fact, quite often express in one word what would take several words in English, but the reverse is also true; to render the English expression "know-how," for instance, would take many words in Hebrew (or any other language). Hebrew has many vivid expressions but for that matter so does every language. It is true that over the centuries a good deal of poetry has been written in Hebrew and relatively few novels or scientific works; this is, however, a matter of literary history and not a question of the resources of the language.

In recent years we have seen the appearance in Hebrew not only of novels, short stories, plays, and essays, but of books on fields as varied as aesthetics, numismatics, pedagogy, navigation, psychology, poultry raising, and military tactics.

A little over two generations have passed since Ben Yehuda made his resolution to speak only Hebrew. In that short space of time Hebrew has been transformed from what was essentially a literary language into an important modern language in which one can talk and write about every conceivable subject. It is indeed a phenomenon without parallel in the history of language.

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THE HAPPY ONE

A Story

EDGAR ROSENBERG

THE nine-year-old emigrant Felix Freudenreich copied with patience and precision a half-length portrait of Henri Dunant from an otherwise useless Red Cross leaflet which he had picked up at one of the stops on his journey a week earlier. His head, as he worked, was bent low over his drawing; his nose all but touched the paper, casting a shadow over founder Dunant's proud black beard; a few strands of hair had fallen across his forehead. The tip of his tongue rolled back and forth between two rows of tiny, uneven, and slightly yellow teeth, as though to encourage his fingers to clutch the pencil more firmly, as though to embolden his thin, moist hands to guide it up and down the paper with not quite so much evident prudence, deliberation, and languor.

The artist Freudenreich worked for the better part of an hour without so much as taking his eyes from his drawing except to reach out now and then for his eraser, a softer grade of pencil, or to consult, quite mechanically and needlessly, the Dunant original which he had taped to the window before him. The window standing slightly ajar and one of the tapes having come loose, the drawing now swung aimlessly in the wind, undecided whether to endure yet longer or to allow itself to be torn finally from its place, to be blown about willy-nilly in the streets beneath, brushing on the way against the busy citizens, against some soldiers, perhaps, some high dignitaries of the Republic, and, unheeded and scorned, to take flight at last over the roofs and steeples of the city, and so to vanish over Lake Geneva.

FELIX had long ago ceased to pay any but the most cursory attention to the portrait on the window, on whose guidance he no longer in the least depended. For by now the artist Freudenreich knew every line, every feature of Henri Dunant's physiognomy, having, in fact, already copied it fifteen or twenty times since his arrival. Not that there were no more interesting or useful things to draw: the chest and closets in the vestibule were filled with old magazines and quaintly illustrated romances, giving off a faintly-scented odor very comforting and reassuring to the mind. It was not ambition, either, or tenacity, which had prompted the fifteen or twenty Dunants in the desk drawer; the emigrant Freudenreich cared little for excellence of draftsmanship and, indeed, his fifteenth Dunant was scarcely better than his first. Ambition he had none at all and perseverance he was more than ever inclined to regard as supremely unnecessary. Oh—he had been aspiring enough once upon a time; once he had been a proud and potent Prince, going to battle on a white horse called Barbarossa; and in those days he had also been: a captain in the hussars; an acrobat; a slayer of dragons; a chimney-sweep; a keeper of Chinese and Blackamoors; a leader of a military band; a starving poet, a starving violinist; an Englishman; the first to climb Mount Everest; somebody's private ambassador to Sir Samuel Hoare; somebody going to the gallows to save his best friend; a builder of bridges; a maker of revolutions; a maker of moving pictures; a saver of souls; an American millionaire entertaining John D. Rocke-

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feller on the roof of the Flatiron Building. . . .

But the events of the past year, which had robbed him in short succession of a father, a mother, an elder brother, and a very good home, had robbed him of his ambitions, too, so that when one of the many elderly ladies who daily invaded his privacy (passing themselves off as "your new great aunt" or "your new second cousin," inspecting him through long-stemmed lorgnettes, mumbling courteous lies about how tall he was and what fine French he spoke)—when one of his visitors had asked him the other day what he should like to be when he grew up, it was simply because he had to tell these people something and because his choice never failed to inspire them with vast confidence, that he replied he thought he would like to be a horse-doctor.

But he continued, day after day, to copy the drawing by the window (copied it with the same air of preoccupation, indifference almost) because Henri Dunant's proud and placid features, his small, gray eyes which neither admonished nor questioned but seemed wholly content to smile as though nothing had happened, represented, all things considered, the most comforting and cheerful sight the emigrant Freudenreich had encountered.

And there was really nothing else to occupy him. He had explored his new surroundings during the first days, had seen all the sights which, his new relatives told him, ought to be seen, but he had not found them very enjoyable. The lake, certainly, was very large and, he supposed, beautiful, but there were dozens of lakes quite as fine at home. On the second day after his arrival, his new father had treated him to a ferry ride to the bastion of Chillon, a black, ugly building, rising, gaunt and uncompromising, above a small inlet of the lake, and he asked himself why people came a long way to admire it.

It was late in August, the schools would not open for another month, and in the meantime his ignorance of the language kept him from making friends with the boys in the neighborhood. (His new parents being Alsatian, his own language was spoken at home.) Some time, indeed, watching his fellows from the window as they ran back and forth in the street, playing soccer, shouting directions at each other in their high, untroubled voices, he would have liked to assert his right to be as they were, would have liked, for example, to join them in *balle au poing* or to ask one of the older boys to let him ride his bicycle for five minutes. But he always ended up by turning away from the window, and beginning another Dunant.

Before filling in the background of the drawing (a Red Cross super-imposed on a sketch of the Matterhorn dissolving into a purple mist in a fashion which made the greatest demands on his artistic fidelity), Felix briefly paused in his work and, for want of more pressing things to attend to, gazed out of the window a while. To keep up his spirits he whistled a few of his favorite songs to himself: he whistled, not by pursing his lips, but through his teeth, a trick he had picked up from someone he had met on the road. He had met so many people on his journey, hundreds of them, and they had all been so very much like each other, cowering noiselessly in cold railroad stations, plodding silently along congested highways, across bare fields and through deserted towns, showing neither anger nor yet fear, enduring their situation not scornfully and not indifferently, but repudiating it with inflexible patience and cunning. . . . So many people had crossed his path, he scarcely remembered any of them. But somebody had come along, somebody called Victor, who had taught him—before he, too, went his way—to whistle through his teeth.

Felix whistled very much the same melodies every day, all of them very dear and good. There was first the staunch and spirited marching song, *"Drei Lilien, drei Lilien, die pflanzt' ich mir aufs Grab, tralala"*; then something light and cheerfully, a waltz, perhaps, some air from the *Fledermaus* or the lovely *"Im Weissen Roessl am Wolfgang See."* Then came another war song, not so tuneful as the first, but full of sadness and longing this time, to be whistled slowly and

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lingeringly: none other than the beautiful ballad of the two French grenadiers who, on their return from Russia, learn that their good Emperor has fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Was schert mich Weib, was schert mich Kind. . . .
Und mein Kaiser, mein Kaiser gefangen.

Felix whistled for the fourth time, and passed on to the next number, something utterly grand and, indeed, world famous, all the more to his taste because it went with a rousing-fine story; it, too, was to be whistled very slowly and deliberately, with a conscious emphasis on its international renown: it was the noble and stately march from the opera *Aida.* And finally (and this invariably concluded his little program) he whistled:

Muss i' denn, muss i' denn zum Staedtele 'naus,
Und du, mein Schatz, bleibst hier. . . .

He loved that song; it was the song, his father had said, that was played on the piers up north whenever any of the bigger steamers, the "Bremen," for example, or the "Europa," set out on their transatlantic journeys —the song, his mother had added, that they would play for him, too, some day, would play for all of them.

Und du, mein Schatz, bleibst hier.

How sad and beautiful that was; how beautiful and sad—with the ship passing silently out of the harbor and the people on the dock waving and crying into their handkerchiefs, shouting yet another farewell, shouting some forgotten word of encouragement to the homeless, and the band growing fainter and lovelier all the time.

STANDING by the window, whistling his songs of the three lilies and the mourning grenadiers, the boy Felix Freudenreich suddenly had a very good idea. He decided to write a letter home. It did not matter particularly to whom he wrote his letter so long as it was to somebody in his old town. That, in itself, limited his choice, of course, for scarcely any of his friends and none of his relations were left in the town, some having been carried off in trucks at a day's notice the way his father and mother and elder brother had, and the others having been scattered over the four corners of the earth, settling in all sorts of unfamiliar countries the very names of which had hitherto conveyed no meaning to anyone unless, like his uncle Justus, he happened to collect stamps —names such as Curaçao or Mozambique or Haiti or Rio de Oro or Luzon. It was not to them that he wanted to write.

He might write to Benno Loewensohn. Benno—the Lion of Judah he was called, because with his flat nose, his thick lips and black curls he looked for all the world like the Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, a person very much in the news in those days. Not that they had ever been particularly good friends, he and Benno; indeed, the Lion of Judah had always awed and frightened him a little, was something of a rowdy with his one hundred and twenty pounds. Oh—he could be nice enough when he wanted to be, would offer him a piece of chewing gum when no one was about, or a licorice stick. But in front of someone else, the Lion of Judah always made it a point to pick on him, and would call him "Butterfinger Felix" or "The Fearful Felix" (mockingly, of course), would provoke him by poking him in the ribs a few times; and once he had actually given him a beating in front of the entire class in order to impress a new student who was taller and rowdier than even the Lion. So Felix was a good deal relieved when his father had finally and categorically forbidden him all intercourse with Benno—the Lion having taken it into his head one afternoon, walking with Felix through one of the busiest sections of the city (and only a block away from the Police Bureau, at that) to roar at the top of his lungs, for all the world to hear:

"Heil Moskau!
Der Hitler is' a' Drecksau!"

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Well, he would not hold the Lion's superior airs against him any longer; he would forgive him for the beating, too, and all the other mean tricks he had played on him. And Benno, he felt certain, would be very glad to get his letter. He had no assurance, of course, that the letter would ever reach him; for all he knew, the Lion might have gone away, too, gone to Curaçao or Mozambique. But at least Felix had no definite information on this point as he had about the others, and it was just possible that Benno had never got out of the country at all. He would write him immediately so that Benno would have his letter before the weekend and could show it around. He would ask his new mother for pen and paper and a postage stamp and get the letter out before noon. It was a very good idea.

"Come in," his beautiful new mother called from the living room. "Is that our Felix?" she cried, laughing, tinkling, and she opened the door for him. She looked beautiful in a merry, pink morning coat embroidered with a whole pastoral scene: glided horses and cows, little chalets, little naked fauns chasing each other along the edge of a brook, dreaming beneath poplars and weeping willows. . . . Beautiful, too, was the way her lips were parted in a gay smile of welcome, the way she slipped her soft hand into his as she led him into the room.

"Excuse me, Madame," Felix began (for he still could not bring himself to call her "maman," as she had told him to) "could I please have—" and he noticed that they had visitors.

"But of course our Felix may have it, whatever it is he wants," his new mother cried. "But first you must say hello to Madame and Monsieur Weill. Monsieur Weill owns the big brewery on Avenue General Dufour," she explained. "It pays to be on good terms with him, doesn't it, Monsieur Weill? And this," she introduced him, "is our Felix."

"Ah," said the brewer Weill. "Felix is it?" he asked in an indulgent, velvety voice, inclining his perfectly round head to one side, "'*Felix heisst die Kanaille,*' as our Schiller says, heh heh," and he held out a fat, hairless hand. "Your very humble servant, Master Felix, heh heh," said the brewer Weill with a short, discreet cackle, pinching him awkwardly in the cheek. His nose lay a little flat on his upper lip so that in speaking he breathed slightly into his moustache. On the right wing of his nose loomed, hairy and formidable, a black mole.

"This is Madame Weill," he added, pointing to his wife, who sat rigid and self-effacing on the couch by the window, her hands folded in her lap. Madame Weill's features were as tiny and angular as her husband's were massive and spherical: her nose was long and pointed and her chin was positively triangular. She wore a black sweater, adorned only by an oval brooch which depicted, in ivory bas-relief, a profile every bit as sharp and pointed as her own; her neck was covered by a broad, black ribbon. Yet she did not seem unkind: her eyes were soft, even shy—they were also slightly crossed so that Felix could not be sure whether she was looking straight at him or straight at the glass cabinet in the corner in which his new father displayed his World War medals and ribbons. But she extended her own tiny hand, slightly inclined her tiny head in her turn, and whispered, "How do you do, Felix?" Whereupon Felix, emboldened by her kindness and willing enough to suffer the brewer Weill to utter the expected remark on his expert French, artfully clicked his heels, bowed stiffly from the waist, and said: "*Enchanté Madame.*"

"Ah," said the brewer Weill, gratified, "so we know French already; *mais c'est épatant, mon cher, épatant,*" he repeated, lightly breathing into his moustache. "It won't be long before you know French better than the President of Switzerland, heh heh, won't he, Prudence?" he demanded of his wife.

"I'm sure he will," whispered Madame Weill, and she said further: "How do you like Switzerland?"

"I like it very much," Felix replied.

"You must be very grateful to your new maman and papa for letting you come to

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such a fine home," Madame Weill whispered. While he spoke, she blushed a little and kept her soft, shy eyes modestly lowered on the black-leather bag in her lap.

"Ah," Monsieur Weill agreed, fingering a long golden watch-chain which protruded from his vest, "you must be very happy to be here. Do you know," he inquired politely, "do you know what Felix means? Do you know what your name signifies, heh heh?" he asked.

"No, monsieur," Felix answered.

"Felix," Monsieur Weill said, "means The Happy One! Are you happy, Master Happy One, heh heh?" he demanded humorously, and he patted him awkardly on the back of his head with his enormous paw.

"But of course he is," cried his new mother, and she took his face between her hands and kissed him on the forehead. "Our Felix is the happiest boy in the world. Oh, and it took him such a dreadfully, dreadfully long time to come to us, we'd completely given him up, didn't we, Felix? You know," she said, and she became quite serious, seemed to ponder something, "Joseph and I should be quite lost without him." For a fraction of an instant it appeared to Felix as though Monieur and Madame Weill exchanged a glance of understanding, a knowing glance. "Na, so," snorted the brewer Weill, clearing his throat, fingering his watchchain, "better late than never; *'spaet kommt er, doch er kommt,'* as our Schiller says, *'der lange Umweg,* heh heh heh, *entschuldige Euer Saeumen,'"* Monsieur Weill recited with great affection and indulgence.

THEN they all began to talk very rapidly in French while Felix pretended to busy himself with a book the very title of which meant nothing to him: it was called *The Reflections of a Non-Political Man.*

They were talking about him, of course; even if Monsieur Weill had not shaken his head so sympathetically, had not gone "tsk, tsk," quite so often, even if Madame Weill had not stolen quite so many surreptitious glances at him, their conversation contained enough key words to leave no doubt what it was they stuck their heads together about. *"Les nazis . . . juif . . . le pauvre garçon . . . oui, toute la famille . . . tsk, tsk . . . ah, espèce d'animal . . . Hitlaire . . . en Pologne . . . comme dit notre Schiller . . ."* they whispered, and every so often he caught his own name, whispered more softly and guardedly than any other word. They pronounced it "Froedongreisch."

And then the good, tiny Madame Weill took a large silk handkerchief from her black leather bag and began to rub her long, pointed nose with a wonderful display of fervor and intensity, and blew her nose so blatantly and resoundingly that it was astonishing to hear it from such a little woman.

"Ah, they shall pay for it," said Monsieur Weill, relapsing into German and so bringing the conversation back to safe, fundamental topics. "They shall pay for it," he repeated, his black mole quivering with the strength of his convictions.

"I do hope they won't have a mind to come marching into Zürich one fine day," his new mother cried. "We should be quite at their mercy, you know."

"Switzerland," said Monsieur Weill with an air of confidence and mystery, "will never go to war. And do you know," he asked, lowering his voice, "why Switzerland will never go to war, Madame?"

"Oh, I'm sure I don't," cried his new mother. "I'm such a goose when it comes to politics and those things," and she pouted charmingly. "But do tell us, Monsieur Weill; I'm sure you have a very clever reason!"

Monsieur Weill gave them to understand that he had, indeed, a very clever reason: slightly tilting back his perfectly round head, his eyes half closed, archly curling his lips, archly raising his brows, wagging his fleshy forefinger with an air of mischief and conspiracy, "Madame," he said, "Switzerland will never go to war because" (and he paused a second) "because Hitler and Mussolini made a little pact, a private little *entente cordiale,* that they would neither of them invade Switzerland so that, heh heh, they would have a place to spend their vacations after the war! Believe me, Madame," he repeated em-

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phatically, "Switzerland will never go to war!"

But now the tiny Madame Weill raised her body as straight as ever she could; rapping sharply on the buckle of her leather bag, her tiny voice quivering with excitement, she said: "It is in God's hands." Her gaze fell on each of them in turn, admonishing and threatening, while her left eye lost itself ominously in the direction of the glass cabinet in the corner.

"Excuse me, my dear Prudence," said her husband ironically, "it is in the hands of Hitler and Mussolini." And then his hostess, laughing, tinkling, asked Felix what it was he had wanted; he wanted, Felix told her, something to write a letter with.

"A letter?" inquired the brewer Weill. "Ah," he said, playfully wagging his fleshy forefinger, "ah, I'm sure there's a young lady at the back of this letter," he cackled. "'*Erroetend folgt er ihren Spuren,*' as our Schiller says," he added mischievously, winking at his wife, his hostess. "Might one know the name of the young lady?" he asked.

"Benno," Felix answered without batting an eyelash, and he wondered what our Schiller would be disposed to say to that.

"Benno, eh? Heh heh, *touché, mon cher, touché*; the young lady's name is Benno, heh heh," Monsieur Weill cackled indulgently. "And might one know where this Benno lives?"

"Back home," Felix answered.

There was a short silence. "You mean," his new mother asked him softly, stroking his hair, "you mean your Benno is still . . . don't you, Felix? He didn't go away . . . or . . . anything?" she asked carefully and something happened to her smile. Monsieur Weill drummed nervously on the edge of his chair; Madame Weill kept her eyes modestly lowered. "I guess so," Felix said. "He never went away, I don't think."

"And this Benno," his new mother asked him, always stroking his hair with the same gentleness and monotony, absent-mindedness almost, "was he . . . is he then a very good friend of yours?"

Felix nodded.

"Well, then, we must certainly write him a long letter," his new mother cried, once more lively and bewitching, "we must certainly write our Benno a nice long letter; we mustn't disappoint our Benno now, must we, Monsieur Weill, must we, Madame Weill?" she cried, and she took three or four pieces of stationery and an envelope from the bureau drawer.

Monsieur Weill said that they certainly mustn't.

"And now, off you go!" his new mother cried, slapping him on his behind. "Say goodbye to Madame and Monsieur Weill, and off you go to write your letter. We mustn't keep our Benno waiting; I should hope not," she cried.

"I should hope not," the brewer Weill said as he shook hands with Felix. "You must come and play with our little granddaughter some time," whispered Madame Weill, and she blushed a little, keeping her eyes modestly lowered on her black leather bag.

Felix Freudenreich wrote to his friend Benno Loewensohn:

"Dear Benno:

"I hope you are in good health. I am well. It is very beauiful here.

"I have not seen you over two years. I hope your father and mother are in good health and your sister Olga finally got married to Herr Lobesam even if he is a goy. I hope they have a baby soon and you will be an uncle. I will not be an uncle unfortunately. How is Lehrer Schimmelpfenning and the Stinking Fritz? Did he put any more stink bombs on Lehrer Schimmelpfenning's chair? I hope so. I do not go to school yet because of vacations and I do not understand French. The name of the town where I live is Vevey. It is much smaller than Munich, there are ony 9000 people, 70% Catholics, 25% Protestants and 3% Israelites and 2% nothing, I looked it up. I also have a new father and a new mother but no brother. My new mother is very beautiful and only thirty-two. All the women wear lipstick and paint their faces up, my new father always makes fun of her because of all the lipstick. His name

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is Joseph like in German only ph instead of f. He is very funny. Yesterday he got mad because the soup was cold, he poured it right back into the tureen, can you imagine that. I can do what I like and it is very nice. There is a lake here, it is called Lac Leman which means Genfer See, it is much bigger than the Starnberger See and the Ammer See put together. It is 581 sq. km. From my window I can see the mountains, the highest is called Dent du Midi, dent means tooth and also mountain peak, and midi means twelve o'clock noon and also south, so you see it can mean anything. I lost my Kodak. How is your bicycle and the poodle Fifi? We also have a cat, she has no name, they just call her 'our cat.' "

After the word "cat," Felix who had been writing very rapidly and without apparent effort so far, indicated by the insertion of two dashes that he had exhausted this part of his letter and, putting down his pen, wondered what else might interest Benno. For two or three minutes he gazed abstractedly at the window, at the Dunant, noticed abstractedy that a second piece of tape had come loose. And suddenly a very wonderful thought struck him. It was just possible—yes, that was it; how funny he had never thought of it before. He would certainly suggest it to Benno; he would have to choose his words very carefully, of course, would use all his powers of persuasion, and perhaps—

"Dear Benno"—he continued, writing slowly, deliberately, pausing between each sentence—"why don't you come to Vevey? I should be glad if you come here. You can't stay in Munich anyway because you are an Israelite and if you come to Vevey it will be just as good as going to Southamerica or Africa or Mosambik and it is a shorter trip. Munich is only 200 km from Switzerland, I looked it up, you can take the express to Friedrichshafen and take the ship to Rorschach over the Boden Sea which is very beautiful and 539 sq. km. Switzerland is a very beautiful country, it is the most beautiful country in the world, even Lehrer Schimmelpfenning said so, remember? Your father can also have his brewery here and get rich all over again, I know a man his name is Monsieur Weill, Monsieur means Herr, he is a brewer also, and I shall be glad to ask him about it, maybe he will give your father a partnership. I could tell him your father was the richest brewer in Munich and is a very good businessman, my father always said you have to wake up early in the morning to put one over on that bounder Philip Loewensohn, but please don't tell him. I shall be glad if you come very soon. Also we have a spare room and I will ask Madame to rent it to you. She is my new mother. Also you will learn French which is much better than what they learn you if you went to Southamerica or Africa. Also Switzerland will never go to war and you know why? Because Hitler and Mussolini made a little pact, a little private ontont kordial that they would leave Switzerland alone and have some place to go for a vacation after the War. I hope they go to Sankt Gallen which is at the other end of Switzerland, about 150 km from here."

Felix re-read what he had written so far and found it, on the whole, very good and to the point. He made one or the other correction, inserted the word "very" in a number of places, and, convinced that his invitation now left no further room for improvement, proceeded to conclude:

"Well, dear Benno, that is all I can think of. I shall be glad if you come soon, write me about it when you come so I can ask Monsieur Weill about your father. Also I will be glad to pick you up at the station."

He signed the letter, "Your friend, Felix Freudenreich." Beneath his signature he wrote in parenthesis the words "The Happy One."

He tried to think of anything else he might have forgotten. Finally he added the following postscript: "Don't feel bad about the beating you gave me in front of Berthold Blutharsch, it wasn't so much." And as a crowning afterthought he printed in heavy, bold letters across the top of the first page the sentence:

"Visit Beautiful Switzerland!"

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With that Felix neatly folded his letter and was about to seal the envelope when it occurred to him that he might send along one of his fifteen or twenty Dunants. Not, of course, by way of tempting Benno, not as just one more bait (for the Lion of Judah was scarcely one to be swayed by anything so wretched and mean as a drawing, would be more likely to respond to a box of caramels, a bag of whortleberries) but as a symbol of something, a token of something between him and Benno.

He took his collection of Dunants from the drawer, carefully examined each copy in turn, held them up to the light to make sure they were free from grease stains, and, picking out the one he thought the least faulty of the lot, stepped to the window to compare it with the original. At that moment, Felix noticed that a third piece of tape had got loose from the window pane, so that Henri Dunant, lopsided and insecure, sustained by the single tape which remained, fluttered more violently than ever in the steadily swelling breeze. The third tape had come loose in evidently the last five or ten minutes; Felix distinctly recalled the two tapes he had noticed as he was writing his letter. . . . Something peculiar struck him, something peculiar and a little frightening. First it merely flashed across his mind, suggested itself quite superficially, on no account to be taken seriously—and in it floated again, penetrated a little more deeply, fastened itself a little more securely—and was trapped. The next moment his whole mind was already filled with his new idea; his whole being was committed to its inviolability and inexorableness. And this was the pact he made: he would count up to one hundred; if, by the time he reached one hundred, the drawing was still hanging in place, Benno would come to him and everything would be fine; but if Dunant fell before Felix reached his mark, then—

He began to count, slowly and deliberately. To make sure he was not cheating, he glanced at the alarm clock on the dresser every so often; whenever he got ahead, he paused until the second hand had caught up with him. 32, 33, 34, he counted. . . . He could hear his heart beat with suspense and fear; he did not remember whether the count was 48 or 58, and, his vision already a little blurred so that he could no longer perceive the second hand from where he stood, he decided that it must have been 48. . . . 48, 49, 50, Felix whispered, 51, 52, 53. . . . But at the count of 92 a gust of wind, more violent than any hitherto, swept into the room; rattling against the window panes, falling, cold and chilling on the boy's cheek, grazing his letter, remorselessly brushing his fifteen or twenty Dunants from the desk, it swept into the room. . . .

The fourth tape came loose without any sound at all. For a second or two, the drawing hovered by the window as though it were very reluctant and sorry to have to relinquish its position after all, clung to the window as though in a last embrace, and then, finally, it fell—to be blown about willy-nilly in the streets below, brushing on the way against some busy citizens, against some soldiers, perhaps, some high dignitaries of the Republic, and, unheeded and scorned, to take flight at last over the roofs and steeples of the city, and so to vanish over Lake Geneva.

For a while, Felix gazed out of the window; idly, patiently, with an air of preoccupation and a little languor. Outside the air was sultry and heavy; a storm was gathering.

Shortly it would rain; he might even stay by the window until dinner, he thought, and watch the raindrops. . . . From beneath the window came the music of a barrel-organ, grinding out, tinny and monotonous, the strains of *"Bella Figlia dell' Amore."*

After a while, the emigrant Felix Freudenreich sat down at his desk, but, having lost all interest in Henri Dunant, he did not pick up his pencil again but merely continued to whistle his songs of the three lilies and the mourning grenadiers.

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NO MORE THAN HUMAN

Four Reflections on Judaism

JACOB SLOAN

I

Israel is the track of God in the desert of oblivion—Abraham Joshua Heschel

I AM writing this the evening after the Day of Atonement, and I hope that I shall not be thought facetious when I say that Professor Heschel's words leave me with a sense of combined guilt and indifference. I have been to the synagogue today, where I heard the selection from the Prophets beginning, "Cast ye up, cast ye up, clear the way," in which Isaiah tells his contemporaries that God prefers justice to their fasting.

I was happy when I heard those words, and it was not only because I have myself given up fasting on the Day of Atonement and the Ninth of Av. (I have done very little for justice.) I was glad because Isaiah still moves me, and because I can still be moved; not that I doubt the effect of powerful language on me—language is my first love—but because Isaiah again cut through the layers that surround my daily life and showed me to myself, in the same way as he had excited my adolescence into an awareness of what was happening to it. I was against my world then, as Isaiah was against his; and, rereading Isaiah on this serious day, I know that I am still rebellious.

Yet the same distance separates us as did when I was fifteen. I am still no prophet, still willing to talk up, but afraid of the pit and the solitude, so I stop short of the final irretrievable act. Of all the prophets, I am perhaps nearest to Jonah, who ran away from his prophecy, yet not really close to Jonah either, for I pity the people of Nineveh, while the gourd over which he was "greatly angry" when it was attacked by a worm means nothing to me. Ecclesiastes and Job are my real contemporaries—but they of course were assimilated Jews; Job may even have been a Gentile from the land of Uz.

That, I suppose, is the reason for my indifference to the image of Israel as the track of God. I am interested in Israel as Israel: as tired slaves yearning for the fleshpots of Egypt in the wilderness hundreds of miles out of Goshen—for literal, real, not symbolic fleshpots.

There, too, you have the reason for my guiltiness. I feel I have no right to "enjoy" Isaiah, to aestheticize and "ethic-icize" Isaiah. If, as the parable has it, I stood with the desert generation on Sinai, I have now broken the commandment: *Thou shalt not bear false witness.*

Professor Heschel's image is large and in the spirit of his ancestor, the hasidic Zaddik Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, who was known as the "lover of Israel." Yet I cannot accept the inevitability of Jewish existence as anything but a piece of rhetoric. Today I cried with the women when the chazan chanted the memorial prayers. I remembered my long-dead feather and recent personal losses, and I was moved by a sense of loneliness and a desire to join my sorrow to everyone else's. That is what my Jewishness seems to mean to me: it is a chance to extend myself into the past and the future. But Israel's past, though unique, was not ineffable, and I expect that its future to which I wish to belong, will continue to be nothing but human.

THE revival of interest in religious themes and issues among intellectuals is one of the phenomena of our time. Here JACOB SLOAN, poet and translator of poetry and prose from Hebrew and Yiddish, contributes a modern commentary on some traditional Jewish ideas. Mr. Sloan was born in Brooklyn in 1918 and is at present on the editorial staff of the *American Jewish Year Book*. He has been a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, and is the author of *Generation of Journey*, a volume of poetry. He recently was awarded the Louis LaMed prize for translation. Mr. Sloan is at present working on a novel.

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II

Three things are fitting for us: upright kneeling, wordless screaming, motionless dance—the Zaddik of Ger.

For us, says the Zaddik, the ecstatic saint, and means not only himself and his hasidim, but all men, including their opponents, the mitnagdim. Or, in secular language, not only the master and his followers, but their opponents as well: the rationalists as well as the mystics, the Philistines as well as the artists. Rationalists and Philistines certainly never assume the classic pose figured in the Zaddik's saying; the *Edinburgh Review* is unimaginable in any of the attitudes on Keats's Grecian urn. But the Zaddik knows this; the juncture of repose and movement of which he is speaking is impossible for large numbers of society, and possible for a few exceptional individuals only in supreme moments (how often did Rilke achieve it—how much of his writing is just talk about, description of, the event of insight?). But the "us" included the atmosphere around the concentrated figures, an atmosphere which is invisible but possesses a weight which must press equivalently and constantly on every surface of the suspended bodies for them to hover in the dynamic equilibrium.

The satiric Yiddish proverb that the rebbe is so big because there are so many small yids around him tells us a great deal about genius in society; but it only tells half. The hasidim were notoriously happy, though I am sure that they were as aware as the mitnagdim that the Zaddik was living off them; they were happy because they considered that they were also "milking" the Zaddik—and they were as right as the mitnagdim.

For the Zaddik was the highest function of his hasidim, as they were the highest function of the peoples in the midst of whom they lived. Just as they took the misery and degradation of the peasant and made it urbane, in the sense of being knowing and aware of itself, so the Zaddik took their troubled sophistication and, joining it with an innocence deeper than the peasant's, reached a clarity more extensive than the mitnagid's. In specific terms, by finding the common denominator with the peasant, and referring it to the Jewish religion, the Zaddik made it possible for the hasidim to operate in the same world with, though on a different level from, the peasant.

The Zaddik was always considered chosen, as Israel was chosen. But the mission for which he was chosen was not teleological—he had to fulfill himself, in the present, through everyday answers to the requests on slips of paper, had continually "to talk and be Torah." There was no wilderness of oblivion for the Zaddik or for Israel—they were living in remembered time, not above or out of time. A Zaddik could relive on the Day of Atonement the role of High Priest in the Temple Service, which he had formerly played in a previous incarnation, and was heard to murmur, "Thus *I* [not the High Priest] would do!" He could push time back before the Creation and speak of the Sabbath before the world was created—had it not obviously been a Sabbath, since the world was created on the first day of the week, which always comes after the Sabbath?

This is not mere naivety, but a sense of continuity extended indefinitely, with a daring so unconscious it is almost prosaic. With such a view of life, Israel could not be the function of any extratemporal force, being essentially conservative and guarding a world system of its own. Yet the system does not revolve around a stationary Zaddik; to be motionless, the dance must be both at the center and the circumference. For what gives the effect of motionless dance is the perfect congruity of the motion of both center and circumference, so that at any perceived moment both dancers, the Zaddik and the people, seem to be caught in the same act, and motionless in relation to one another. . . .

This is an image I can accept as fitting for us indeed, a relationship I can enter into, with myself and my world. Upright kneeling, wordless screaming, motionless dance—this is a harmony that means being not God, Israel, eternity, but me.

III

And yet I will not, cannot, and, finally, really do not wish to join the circles around the Zaddik of Ger. For I belong at heart to the mitnagdim, the puritan deniers. A circle is a self-enclosing unit; a movement which aims primarily at conserving its own symmetry necessarily retrogrades: the circle

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wears thin, distends, elongates under the strain and friction involved in preserving an arc single and simple. In a universe where stasis is impossible because it is dimensionally limited, the conservative circle is corruptible, even in its own supernatural terms; the thought in the mind of God is a thought in the mind of fallible man—and the paradox is acceptable on emotional terms, but no other.

In fact, the Zaddik inevitably eclipsed and disharmonized his circle, as the Church irresistibly pulled the Middle Ages down with it, the destructive hero of its own Temple, and as Communism and fascism in our own times undermine contemporary materialistic monism. For, being men, the Zaddikim had either to grow or decline; they grew to grotesque giants, their followers declined to pygmies; the cathedrals became Towers of Babel, the peasant huts hovels.

It is true that the Church and Hasidim represented the desire for self-perpetuation carried to an infinite expression, but again, infinity is a mental paradox, and social movements are, like the animal man, "gregarious." We who have just seen the wreckage of one self-perpetuating social structure, Nazism, cannot believe in the validity of any other.

It is this very consciousness of the man's essential "human quality" which is behind the unconsciously deliberate atonalities of the conscious expositions of modern life. Modern statement is obscure because it accepts and works with, first the discordance of human beings individually, second the complexity and unpredictability of their behavior in groups, and third, the unintelligibility of the multi- (not super-) dimensional universe they inhabit. Our predicament has been that we realize ourselves, are engaged in realizing ourselves more than at any time in the past, yet at the same time are envious of the "harmony" of preceding centuries, which went with an aversion to and sublimation of limitations by philosophy and art. We are afraid of the total signification of our irrational figures. Yet we can, if we look closely into the equations *they* worked out, glimpse our own functions. Two midrashim come to mind:

The first is an injunction to prefer tearing down with the old to building up with the young, "for the construction of the young is destruction, the destruction of the old, construction." This is wry and devastating, an old man's slash at youth, but the sword is two-edged. If it is the nature and consequence of youth to be radical—then by all means let us be what we are! Hotspur is a natural force, and his singular leaps to the moon are as necessary as the "mature" *Realpolitik* policies of Henry. The Torah, the same rabbis said, was given to those who learn it—the truth or truths are and will be the possession of those who create as well as those who learn them, and those who refute them, as well as those who hold fast to them. They are the collective possession of all mankind, not biologically but temporally.

The trouble with our modernity comes not when it is too rash, but when it is afraid to be rash. We want to be "constructive," and that is not our function.

The other metaphor from the ancients concerns the story of Jacob's ladder. It says that Jacob refused to ascend his historic ladder at Bethel at God's invitation, for fear he would have to descend again, like all the other princes of the world. God reassured him that that would not happen; but Jacob had no faith, and would not ascend.

Well then, superficially our times need faith, in their God, their function, their meaning. But, going deeper, we need *consciousness*—of the inevitability of all human failure. Israel, which is Jacob's later name, lacking faith, built himself a fence around the Law—but not to keep the world out, but himself in; to prevent the recurrence of ladder dreams, he removed the stones from his plot. He stayed at home and tended his own garden, and by the time of the Emancipation, the dream awakening of the Western world, his compulsive lilies were festering far worse than their weeds. . . .

I love the classic and know it superior in many ways to the modern—though it does not touch me as closely, if more profoundly. Yet if all I have to recommend to my children are the classics, however "modernized," I shall consider that I have literally not lived, and am no real father. I shall consider my failure as due to cowardice, and shall have missed filling the role that is typical of man—the "tragic hero." For I am convinced that the only assurance of immortality is the journey inward, the accomplishment of mortality. Our sole projection of ourselves into

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the future can be the creation in the present, with the materials and techniques of the past and present, of a body of self-awareness. That is the corridor which is the only "anteroom to the world to come."

IV

This Torah is like two paths:
One of sun, and one of snow.
Take the one and die of sunlight,
Take the other, and die in the snow.
What to do?
Walk between the two.
—From the Midrash, version in *Hammer on the Rock*

ALTOGETHER unlike both death in the snow and death of sunlight is the slow leaking death of our generation. It is not a Hamlet death, for Hamlet knew what he had to do, and why he could not do it; we are sure of neither. For us the Torah, that is, the truth, is not two gleaming and dangerous paths between which we must advance to a living God; for we have neither Torah nor living God. We have not refused the Torah, as the nations of the world are reputed to have done in the Talmud; it has not been offered us, or, if offered, we have not known.

Yet, in a different, secular sense, we have taken both paths. In the last stand at the Warsaw Ghetto we took the path of snow. In Israel we are taking the path of sunlight. They are the paths of desperation, of impatience. We cannot wait till Doomsday, for righteousness to reign supreme. We suspect that Amos would be standing opposite us on that day, mocking our disappointment at "the day of the Lord."

Nor have we the time to wait, since time does not exist for us beyond our lives. We have no Messiah, no redemption outside of ourselves; rather than wait for Elijah to lead the donkey in by the halter of poverty, we prefer to try the Emperor of Japan's white horse, whose spurs are power.

Yet our death in the snow at Warsaw was a moral victory. And we shall not die of sunlight in Israel—the worst that will happen is that we shall live to be as comfortable as everybody else. So there are, apparently, more than two choices; there is always a third and fourth choice in life—why should that not be true in morality as well? We do not face a choice between good and evil alone, war and peace, health and sickness. No: we have discovered a typographical *deus ex machina* for our moral dilemma: the symbol between "and" and "or," the "/" which means both "and" and "or," as well as either "and" or "or," depending on one's interpretation. And we choose to interpret moral choice as being a relative matter; sometimes it is "and," sometimes it is "or," and sometimes it is "/."

Was Dostoevsky right? Does morality come down in the end to the Talmudic proposition that everyone who wrecks a human life wrecks a complete world? We have an answer to that, spontaneous and terrible: Of course! We wish to complete the wrecking of a world that evil, or stupid, or ignorant, or simply blind human beings have half-ruined already. No, we do not wish to be supermen, but we want to dignify our humanity, by purifying it of confusion. We want neither the world's honey, nor its sting. We do not want simply to be tolerated any longer. We do not want to be gloriously different; we want our own seat in the UN of history.

Is this in our Jewish tradition? For once in the two thousand years of our existence, we do not wish to question our assumptions. We have had enough of self-doubt. Let us stop being ironic, and try to be seriously tragic. If we end tragically—though we end tragically—we shall have lived and died in style.

We do not care whether or not we are simply rejecting the pattern of our fathers, and their fabulous "path between"; anyhow, if we are, we are being real sons, and will be fit to be real fathers.

Is this Judaism? It does not matter, it is human. We do not wish either to be Jews at home and men abroad, or men at home and Jews abroad, but men, at home and abroad.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

WEST BRONX: FOOD, SHELTER, CLOTHING

The Abundant Life Just Off the Grand Concourse

RUTH GLAZER

WHEN the Woodlawn Road-Jerome Avenue express rushes out of the tunnel at 161st Street in the Bronx, the subway rider catches a glimpse of rows of six-story apartment houses flanking the elevated tracks on both sides and extending far back into the hinterland. Viewing the repetitious pattern of yellow squares made by the lighted windows block after block, the outlander cannot resist musing profoundly to himself, "Ah, those poor people living out their pallid lives in regimented cells, one above the other." But lucky for him that the Bronxite wedged next to him cannot read his thoughts; he would transfix him with that characteristic glare of the embattled straphanger. Pallid? Ha!

Why, there's more life, vigor, and excitement in one single Bronx apartment house at six o'clock in the evening than in a thousand elm-lined Main Streets on a Fourth of July. Visualize six little girls, none over three and a half feet high, dragging their roller skates up over the marble staircase; two or three fourth-floor mothers trying to summon recalcitrant sons to dinner; the building superintendent, flanked by irate ground-floor tenants, descending on a group of boys engaged in playing "association."

To be sure, the returning fathers, crushed by forty minutes in the subway, are extraordinarily noiseless at this hour.

THE West Bronx is located in time midway between the lower East Side (or the East Bronx) and West Side Manhattan. It is a community whose residents seem occupied full time in discovering the wonderful things produced by the world that can be had for even the moderate amount of money at their disposal. In so doing, they have created a style of living all their own.

Take any of the main arteries that mark the topography of the West Bronx—170th Street, Burnside Avenue, University Avenue, the Upper Concourse, Fordham Road. What streets anywhere can match them in their sheer number of food stores, ice-cream parlors, delicatessens, restaurants, specialty shops for women and children, haberdasheries, and that special institution of the area, the "hardware" store, which maintains only the most distant kinship with establishments elsewhere engaged in selling nuts, bolts, gardening tools, and other such items. These "hardware" stores are crammed with every conceivable ingenious brightly colored gadget for the kitchen—painted bread boxes, the newest thing in shelving, 22-carat warranted gold-plated china tea sets, chromium Hanukkah candelabra, ruby glass luncheon-sets,

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RUTH GLAZER's informal sociological exploration, "The Jewish Delicatessen" (COMMENTARY, March 1946), was one of the earliest of a number of studies of types and institutions in American Jewish life that have appeared in this department. Here Mrs. Glazer turns her talents to painting a larger canvas, and presents a picture of the West Bronx version of the American scene and its economy of abundance as applied to everyday—and Sunday—living. Mrs. Glazer was born and raised in the Bronx, attended Hunter and Queens Colleges, and has done research and editorial work for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the magazine *Labor and Nation*, and the Joint Distribution Committee. At present she is engaged in research on the trade union movement.

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and a whole window of bottles, sterilizers, infant china and silverware, and complicated devices for warming baby food. For the West Bronx is nothing if not a *crèche*.

Indeed, the earmark of any display in the West Bronx store is the profusion. Park Avenue can have its Gristedes with six carefully polished apples bedded down in tissue paper and exposed to public view on a white lace doily. In the West Bronx there are veritable mountains of apples in all varieties, prices, and stages of edibility. From the dim, dark, cool interior of the fruit store, they proceed in carefully segregated groups, from the most expensive to the least, until finally whole bushels of green ones spill out of the flimsy enclosing boundaries of the store onto the street.

As for the bakeries, who would hazard even a guess on the number of barrels of whipped cream which are beaten up in the early morning hours behind the glass and tile facades of the West Bronx bake shops, and which later in the day make their appearance atop and inside every shape and manner of cake—including the humble coffee ring?

Where else in this world can there be found anything to compare with the Victory Layer Cake—not to be confused with the cake of the same name, say, in the chain bakeries of Manhattan? There it is a triumph in deception, with its chemically achieved batter, a composite of protein substitute for egg, karo for sugar, some dried-out milk curds, a bit of flour, and various chemical elements—sodium propionate, monosodium glutamate, etc.—topped off with that culinary superfraud of mass-production hygienic kitchens, "marshmallow icing."

Victory Layer Cake, as defined in the West Bronx, is quite another matter. Its inspiration is clearly one derived from some heathen and sybaritic god of another time. But essentially it is a simple construction with an all too transparent purpose: to pile the largest quantity of whipped cream into the smallest cubic area. This feat is accomplished with ingenious simplicity, by piling, between seven or eight of the thinnest slices of chocolate cake ever carved by a Bronx baker, quarter-inch layers of whipped cream, not marshmallow, not a gelatinous substitute with more protein content, but simple, thick, rich, heavy whipped cream. It is to be noted that this triumphal concoction is purchased by the pound.

But for all the glory and glamor of his whipped-cream cakes, the true art of the Bronx baker, the real and individual cornerstone of his reputation, is his bread and rolls. Although it is true that it has not been attempted outside the area, is it so hard, after all, to whip up some cream and put it between a few layers of cake? But where else do they bake a rye bread with caraway seeds that is not a sour, heavy lump requiring paper-thin slicing to be edible or, at the other extreme, that sweetish, pasty loaf so uncomfortably reminiscent of white bread? The true rye is soft and crusty when fresh, and grows more flavorful as it ages. Any Bronxite would smile at the raptures of our more fluffy-headed lady food columnists in the metropolitan dailies when they first taste rye bread. "It's an exciting, delicious taste-treat," they chirrup, "especially when spread with fresh, sweet butter." As any gourmet north of the Harlem River could have told them, it's not only a "taste-treat," but also the staff of life.

The course of the week in the Bronx could almost be plotted according to the bread that the housewife buys. Except for the occasional loaf of packaged bread, brought in conscientiously for its breakfast-toast-making properties, the daily staple is rye bread, with an occasional loaf of whole wheat or pumpernickel for variety. Corn bread has, somehow, never been able to achieve a regular position and is generally sold in half-pound or pound chunks carved out of a huge oval five- or ten-pound loaf. It is always bought with a kind of daredevil, on-the-spur-of-the-moment air. As if yielding to some hidden and finally irrepressible impulse, the housewife will call out, " All right, and give me a piece of corn bread, too; but not too big." Although the Sabbath may not be observed in other respects, for Friday night and Saturday one buys *chaleh*. (In some areas, where all sense of proportion has been lost, *chaleh* can be had every day in the week.) On Sunday, rolls achieve a sudden prominence with the Sunday morning trip downstairs for the Sunday paper "*and* a dozen rolls." These range in variety from the classic bagel and its variant, the egg bagel, through the *pletzel*, Bialystoker and other-

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wise, the seeded water-rolls, the soft sweet-rolls, until finally at the end of the spectrum it is hard to distinguish the crumbly yellow crescents from cake. Recently, finding no other way to satiate the appetite of his customers for *pletzels,* the baker has added yet another variety of bread to his shelves—"Something New—17c—Try It—Onion Bread." All this is displayed with a sense-numbing profusion in bins and racks behind plate glass—an element of decor that, in addition to its decorative properties, has proved itself to be one of the few devices capable of thwarting the thumb-and-forefinger test for freshness.

THE same cornucopia effusion marks the groceries and the dairy stores with their windows crammed full of row upon row of cheeses and tubs of butter, and the appetizing stores which lure passers-by with whiffs from their open barrels of pickles and peppers, sauerkraut and sour tomatoes. The delicatessens, however, hide demurely behind window displays of dummy beer cans. But for those who have eyes to see there are steaming frankfurters and knishes on the grill and untold delights behind the clouded glass and shredded colored cellophane.

Only one institution remains austerely aloof from this kind of display. This is the kosher butcher store. Even the chicken market indulges in a kind of raw profusion, exhibiting trenches of vari-colored chickens for the selection of the housewives. But the butcher store is quite a different matter.

Whereas on other days the patronizing of the various food stores is a matter requiring only an ordinary degree of acumen, tact, and watchfulness, a certain air of solemnity settles over the West Bronx on Thursday. Thursday is devoted to *einkoifen far shabes.* Even emancipated young housewives have been caught up in the tyranny of this custom. This is the day when the housewife descends to do battle with the butcher in earnest. Small purchases during the week of "a few veal cutlets," or "a piece liver" can be regarded as minor skirmishes. The one point that must be firmly grasped is that one does not buy meat from a butcher, *cholile;* one negotiates. One lives in a state of armed truce.

The young bride, for example, goes through a long period of training before she dares ask for so much as a single lamb chop. This rigorous course includes elements both scientific and psychological. To know the cuts of meat derived from the cow, the calf, and the lamb is, of course, elementary. (For to what end all this fencing if one simply gives away one's hand by asking for two pounds of meat for pot roast?) Even more important are the little professional tricks suspected of every butcher by every well-versed housewife. This information is generally delivered *sotto voce* as the butcher disappears to get the cut of meat requested; viz., "If he asks you what you want it for, tell him you want to broil it. It's *his* business that you want to use it for chopped meat?" or "Make sure when you ask for *mittel* chuck, that he doesn't give you single chuck."

This masked antagonism, this deep-lying mutual suspicion between the kosher butcher and his customer, is symbolized by the customarily empty showcase. The only function of this elaborate testimonial to refrigeration seems to be to set a restraining barrier, a neutral zone, between the two contending parties. Every piece of *flanken,* every shoulder steak must be custom-cut, and each piece of meat is held up for inspection with the furtive glances, the special avowals which only a butcher knows how to utter. Occasionally a timid young woman will attempt to influence his mysterious choice as he disappears into the refrigerator. "A small piece of calf's liver," she'll say, "I hope it'll be good. It's for the baby." To dissipate the illusion that the prospective cut is not already predestined, the butcher will respond, "Whaddya mean 'good'? Would I give you a piece of liver that isn't good?" Is there a reply?

Unlike other stores, too, there is a leisurely, almost club-like atmosphere here as the women gather of a Thursday morning. Then the butcher holds court, announcing his opinions on the world, commenting on departing customers. There are no small private conversations between neighbors. No. There is a general public discussion and everyone is included. "Well, Mr. Pizetsner" (not "Sam," as he might say to the grocery-store man), will begin an older and more favored customer, "and how are your sons these days?" "All right, thank God; the new business in Flatbush is doing fine." "So, how do you like living in Brooklyn, Mr. Pizetsner?"

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"Well, it's not so bad. We have our own house. . . ." "It must be a terrible trip for you every day. How come you don't move the store to Brooklyn?" "Listen," says the butcher, as he prepares to quarter a chicken, "everyone says the same thing. My wife wants me to give up the business. (*chop*) The boys have a good spot for me there. (*chop*) But you know what I say . . .? (*The cleaver is suspended.*) I tell 'em, I couldn't give up my business here. Where would I ever find such customers? They're not customers. They're dolls!" (*chop, chop*) Really, could you buy in the A&P?

IN VIEW of the breathtaking variety of food which confronts his eyes and nose as he walks down any one of the main streets, the incautious observer might well conclude that Lucullan feasts are concocted each evening in Bronx kitchens and that Bronx housewives are culinary paragons. Nothing, alas, could be further from the truth. Quantity, perhaps, or wholesomeness, yes (or maybe). But variety—never. For the older generation there were certain extenuating circumstances. Burdened with the care of many children in cramped quarters, the mother of the family cooked dishes which required a minimum of preparation and watchfulness. Conservative calculation would reveal that in the first thirty years of her married life a good mother of the old school demolished 1,560 chickens and served up 6,240 portions of pot roast. As might be deduced from these figures, the older generation was not particularly aquiver over the culinary art; their approach was not adventurous but strictly utilitarian.

I remember once overhearing the following conversation in a neighbor's kitchen:

"Mmm, Mrs. Siegel. It smells wonderful. Tell me, what are you cooking for dinner?"

"Who can tell?" she replied. "All I know is that I've put up a pot of water and an onion and some meat. If all goes well and the family comes home early we'll have some soup and some soup meat. And if the water cooks out and the meat burns a little, we'll have pot roast."

Offsetting this casualness toward everyday cookery, this generation brought a certain prayerful solemnity to the preparation of certain festive dishes, where failure cannot be turned into a last-minute success. There is, for example, the delicate business of *untershlogen a borsht* (beating eggs into a borsht). The first step requires the cook to make her peace with the world and renounce all anger against her fellow-mortals. Having done this, she may proceed to break two eggs into half a cup of warm borsht and pour it ever so slowly, beating it with a *steady hand,* into the soup. But if her spirit remains troubled the borsht will infallibly be streaky, and no scientific explanations to the effect that the borsht was too hot or the eggs too cold will ever convince the cook who *knows.*

Sometimes American-born daughters, learning in the institutional ads of that hallowed myth about recipes handed down from generation to generation, attempt to introduce this charming practice in their own families. There has been, however, one difficulty. The ladies from the old country have developed a kind of shorthand for recipes, something akin to the reply of the teacher who, when asked how to spell "immediate," answered "With two m's." So the girl who has painfully managed to extract and translate what she thought was the recipe for cookies, suddenly notices that she has no specification for flour. "Don't you use any flour?" she will ask. "Why, of course," replies her mother, aghast at such ignorance. "Well, how much?" she will pursue. "Who can tell in advance? Whatever the batter requires. . . ." This sort of exchange is discouraging. No wonder, despite their pride in their advanced and experimental outlook in the arts of living, the daughters of the new generation have unwittingly slipped back into the old inherited routine. Few, consequently, escape the chagrined surprise of hearing their own sons complain, in that classic formula, "Aw, ma. Chicken soup again."

THE truth is there are only two kinds of occasions that utilize the full resources of the food stores. One is the ceremonial dinner, which proceeds gravely through ten courses, both hot and cold, in high disregard for the eating capacities of the guests. The second, and more common, is "having a few friends in for the evening," which inevitably concludes with a midnight snack. Once having decided between the delicatessen store and the appetizing store, the rest is according to ritual. The evening guests

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are customarily presumed to have gone without food for three days and their prospects for the future are also not considered very hopeful. With this in mind (assuming the nod to have gone to the appetizing store) a not ungenerous sample of every type of "home-made salad," and of every variety of smoked, pickled, creamed, or otherwise bedevilled carp, whitefish, sturgeon, herring, butterfish, and salmon, and half a dozen kinds of cheeses are extracted from the trays and barrels of the appetizing store. Every suggestion of the naive husband (along to help carry the packages) that surely a limit has been reached, is silenced with the slogan, "Better too much than too little."

Sometimes one wonders whether here we have not been the victims of our own enthusiasms. During the war, all the synagogue sisterhoods, B'nai B'rith chapters, and, in fact, every organization engaged in entertaining Jewish soldiers, worked on the assumption that next to the unconditional surrender of Germany the dearest wish of every Jewish recruit was for a breakfast of lox and cream cheese and bagels. In the service of this myth men have spent the night speeding over treacherous roads to the nearest metropolis in order to get fresh hot bagels for "the boys." Undeniably these breakfasts were always well attended and the supplies devoured. But perhaps it was only because such breakfasts were as much of a rarity to the soldiers as to the good ladies of the sisterhood.

How explain the vitality and longevity of the delicatessen and appetizing stores in Jewish neighborhoods, considering that they are, so to speak, dietetically out of bounds, except for "occasions"? For unchanged is the tradition from mother's time—to admit to one's neighbor that one is having delicatessen for an evening supper, unless there is a clear and present emergency, is to admit that one is an incompetent, shiftless wife and mother who cares nothing for the health of her husband and is cheerfully ready to poison her offspring. Happily for the younger element and husbands, there are two types of occasions on which the holder of the purse strings may relax the first principle of any Bronx housewife—namely, No Delicatessen. The first, already mentioned, is situations of extreme emergency, to wit, a gas main has broken and the house is deprived of light and fuel; or the family has just moved and the barrel with the dishes seems to be inexplicably missing; there has been a fire and the kitchen has been destroyed; or mother has been downtown shopping at Klein's. At other times a coalition of all other members of the household can temporarily so overpower her that she will look the other way when the provisions are brought onto the premises. But, on ordinary days, to initiate such a thing herself is to commit two other sins, in addition to those noted before. She is guilty of extravagance, because everybody knows what prices in appetizing stores are, and, worst of all, she is not Giving Her Family a Hot Meal!

For let a girl be never so flighty, let her breakfast daily on Pepsi-Cola and salami oblivious to the tears and prayers of her mother, once she is mistress of her own household she is immediately an authority on nutrition and the intricate relations of vitamins and calories and proteins to health. And it is this last that, when all is said and done, shapes the patterns of the meals and menus typical of the West Bronx. Good, healthy, nourishing food! "Can a boiled egg be bad for you?" "Who ever heard of chicken hurting anyone?" With such sweet reasonableness tradition conquers another generation.

PERHAPS it is because in her youth the present-day housewife slept most of her nights on a folding cot put up in a hallway or a dining room or in the kitchen. Whatever the reason, today both sides of Jerome Avenue are lined with stores specializing in bedding: special extra-thick mattresses, extra-curly coiled springs, super-warm and light quilts made of 100 per cent imported white European goose down. Macy's, which is capable of packing a quilt with simple lamb's wool, is somehow not good enough. But it doesn't stop here. A girlhood spent sitting on hard kitchen chairs, or worse, on stiff-backed, gloomy dining-room chairs, bears fruit in the Bronx living room filled with the softest of down-cushioned chairs and sofas upholstered in the brightest of "cherry red" or "chartreuse."

Now the down cushion, as everyone knows, is like the most delicate of soufflés—every jar, every touch, the merest finger-

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print is clearly visible on the dimpled surface. Although it is true that she spent her youth badgering her mother to "throw out that damn dining room set, and get a living room so that we'll have some place to sit, for-god's-sakes," the pleasure of looking at the unruffled surface transcends the grosser —and more masculine—enjoyment of sitting on it. Protests from the man of the house—"But, my God, what did we buy it for, if not to sit in?"—are met with that look of contempt which the aesthete bestows on a philistine.

The delight with the soft and sumptuous does not end with pillows and coverlets. Everywhere straight lines are abhorred. Lamps are preferred in the form of baroque vases, their shades adorned with poufs and swaths of ruffling, the drapery is of a weight and quantity calculated to set a luxurious barrier between the beholder and the University Avenue view. Wherever there is an upholstered surface, it is tufted; wherever a wooden one, it is carved into sinuous outlines and adorned with gilded leather.

But a couch, after all, is at best a couch, a chair is a chair, and a drum table, however gilded its adornments, still only a drum table. The hallmark of individuality, the sign of a discriminating owner aware of the finer things in life, is the handpainted oil painting. On the whole, they are of two types—the landscape and the portrait. The almost overwhelming preference for the landscape, or, more properly, the "scene," probably indicates that people like to get their money's worth. The scene is generally made up of four compositional elements arranged traditionally as follows: a rather gloomy green forest in the left foreground, a road winding diagonally across the picture, and a brighter area (a field of waving wheat or flowers) extending backwards from the middle distance on the right hand side. The whole is enlivened (here's where the value comes in) with a *figure* walking down the road. These classical elements, however, are changeable and interchangeable. The road, for example, may become a winding brook (in which case the figure is replaced by a swan), or the field may become a lake, or the forest and field may change places. But the formula remains, light balanced by dark, or sunshine by gloom, to put it moralistically.

There are two comments which are appropriate upon seeing such a picture for the first time:

(1) The practical—"I'm telling you, the frame alone is worth it."

(2) The aesthetic—"A picture like that, you won't get tired of looking at so fast."

I know of an exile in Tennessee who was unable to find anything in all of Nashville, or its environs, to match the splendor she remembered, and finally resorted to importing her furniture from the Bronx. You have only to step into her living room to feel yourself transported 500 miles back to the Grand Concourse. Even the draperies fall in little puddles on the floor in the prevailing manner indicating (1) opulence—"Let it be a little longer"—(2) superlative housewifery—"Her floors are so clean you could eat off them."

BRONX style extends to clothing, too, for undeniably there *is* a Bronx style, the result of an appreciation for, even a reveling in rich fabrics, in sumptuous textures, in elaborate folds, in dense colors, and in complex designs. This emerges in the extravagant hats, the weighty fall of a dress, the dark and brilliant nail polish, and the sculptured, appliquéd, and platformed shoes.

Even men can taste a little of this sheer exuberance of costume, now that it has been semi-legalized as "California style." They can have silky gabardines (just a bit more silky than Brooks Brothers would approve), smooth, rich flannel shirts, of an altogether different nature from the scratchy, plaid, woodsman's type, and brilliant, broadly knotted ties. And so—a suit is not a suit, but an experience, just as a fur coat is the achievement of a decade of yearning. It would be a shame if people didn't notice.

For Sunday afternoons the men have developed a special style suitable for airing the baby, milling about on the Concourse, visiting relatives in the neighborhood, and not inappropriate for local parties or poker sessions. This costume, often the cause of hidden, or sometimes energetically expressed, distress on the part of the wife, enables the Bronx husband to indulge his liking for informality (no tie), color (!), and comfort (sport shirt). With the aid and abetment of local haberdashers (unwittingly assisted by Esquire's Bold Look), the men have gained their first victory in a decade over the deli-

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cate sensibilities of Bronx taste which draws a sharp distinction between what is proper for everyday and what is required for occasions. The women, however, will not be deterred from their knowledge that Sunday is the day to be straitened by corsets, pinched by shoes, hobbled by skirts, and burdened by furs.

Paradoxically enough, the New Look with its voluptuous flowing lines and its emphasis on the curving feminine form has not brought unmixed joy to the female population of the West Bronx. Because accompanying the New Look is also the New Hairdo which requires a closely cropped cap-like effect at the opposite pole from the upsweep, that seemingly careless arrangement of fluffs, curls, waves, and ringlets lacquered firmly into place from one week's appointment with the hairdresser to the next, which has been the mode for the past ten years. Today it is only the forty-and-overs who still cling, although in diminishing numbers, to the hairdo which is already beginning to betray their generation.

THE role of the Concourse in Bronx life, like its geographical location, is central. Its once aristocratic buildings have become shabby and it no longer has its former prestige. But as the longest and broadest avenue in the Bronx it is still a name to conjure with. Do you desire a pastoral afternoon? At one end of the Concourse there is a small but intricate park, complete with bandstand and Sunday afternoon concerts. Or perhaps your taste fancies a walk on civilized pavements. There is the middle section where one may see and be seen. And at its far end is the big shopping center that is almost the lodestar of Bronx life. Here the best furniture and clothing stores display their brightest wares so that the young may gaze and be educated and the old may sigh and envy.

But the architecture of the Bronx is basically characterized by the long sober lines of six-story apartment houses, built some twenty to thirty years ago, running in a northerly and southerly direction, intersecting the main avenues. The majority of these edifices are built in a plain, unpretentious style vaguely suggesting Italian Renaissance fortresses. In harmony with their solid construction are the gloomy but magnificent hallways that even the marauding hands of three or four generations of children have not been able to disfigure. There are black-and-white tiled floors, laid out in formal patterns to resemble marble; there are gilded, pilastered walls, heavy mirrors, tables and chairs of an indefinite but regal historical period, and rococo flambeaux on the walls, unfortunately requiring the prosaic aid of electricity. The arrangement and interior architecture of the apartments also suggest palace chambers. The entrance to a meanly proportioned living room, for example, will be guarded by two elaborate French doors; the walls imitate wood paneling; the floors are parqueted; once again, there are flambeaux on the walls. Most buildings front directly on the street, but many, built on a larger scale, have center courts frequently ornamented by a pirouetting nymph or a cupid cut in stone.

The "new" houses of the Bronx (some are more than ten years old) are all built in a uniform "modern" style, with white or cream brick facade, casemented windows, and chromium-decorated doorways. Their interiors are likewise constructed smoothly, with a minimum of doorways, mouldings, and decoration. Despite their great number, these houses always seem exceptional, and, somehow, frivolous, appearing at random among the "regular" apartment houses, and practically never in solid blocks.

The sobriety and regularity of the life of the West Bronx is suggested more by the even and dull architecture of the side streets than by the color and movement of the shopping avenues. This regularity is enforced by the schedule of the head of the family: when he must get up to go to work, when he returns—this sets the boundaries of the day. Few of the housewives can afford to break the pattern with club meetings and charitable activities; most are completely absorbed by the creatures of their own creation—home, children, their style of living. Only the children, and particularly the adolescents among them, are free. Probably the children are little different outwardly from other city children. The girls play with their dolls, or mimic their mothers, or rather awkwardly play in street games. Once out of the confines of their apartments, the boys rush around the streets in packs, dressed uniformly during most of the year in plaid shirts and corduroy trousers.

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At play, both groups are rather anonymous. But the adolescents are another story.

When the weather is warm and pleasant, numerous islands of greenery, groupings of stone benches, and even little parks seem to appear in almost every area of the West Bronx. During the day the benches are occupied principally by mothers with baby carriages, old men talking with their friends, and old ladies sunning themselves. In the early evening these areas lose their calm. The benches are still occupied by the old, but perched on the iron railings or standing about in knots in out-of-the-way corners are groups of teen-age boys and girls. Gradually the darkness begins to seethe with their laughter and talk. Those still unattached wander casually but tensely up and down the paths hoping to be invited into a "crowd." The girls here are young, carefully made up, carefully dressed, very wise, and terribly shy and afraid, for all their outward brazenness. The boys are very bold in their new power. It is up to them to set the tone of the group, to tease the girls, to make wisecracks about the passers-by, while the girls "just die laughing." The "crowd" is free-floating in space and time. What relation can it have to a stifling apartment, to dowdy mothers, to school, to relatives? It is disembodied excitement; night after night the girls and boys are drawn by it to the same spot.

The college students soon find themselves too old for this teen-age "crowd," or too busy, or too superior. For many it means a period of loneliness, especially if they go to City College or Hunter College, which are restricted, respectively, to men and women. (Although today, as an aftermath of the war, these schools have a sprinkling of the opposite sex.) But in the West Bronx, at least, they have one rendezvous which has as much fascination as any park railing or street corner. This is the reference room of the Fordham Branch of the public library. Here, every evening and on Saturdays during the school year, every seat is taken with earnestly studying figures. As everyone knows, of course, a borrowed sheet of paper can lead to a conversation, a conversation to a date, a date to a romance, and a romance, well. . . .

But the adolescents and the college students represent temporary aberrations in Bronx life.

Some do manage to leave—a few intellectuals, those who marry non-Jews, or take jobs in strange cities. But those who remain are slowly drawn back into the vortex of family existence and the pattern of Bronx living.

It doesn't take long for the teen-agers to discover that the generalized excitement of the crowd is not enough, and they begin either to pair up within the crowd or to find themselves boy friends or girl friends outside it. Their progression here is as simple as a pick-up in the Fordham library. Before she knows it, the young girl, who required not much more than a new suit every spring and a "good dress" for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, absolutely *needs* a "cocktail" dress, platform shoes, a fur jacket, if possible, and whatever other trappings she can afford or her mother is willing to buy for her. From here it is only a step to the suddenly awakening consciousness of interior decoration. When there emerges the chain of thoughts beginning, "When *I* get married. . . ." the circle has been closed.

So the present generation is only the continuator and the embellisher of the Bronx style. It does not revolt against the given. It does not seek for new modes of expression in its domestic arrangements. The younger generation (aside from the intellectuals, who, even so, are more infected by this milieu than they think) has not yet exhausted the present pattern. (The translation of sheared beaver into Guatemalan cotton or slipper satin into Javanese batik, or the use of leather Mexican drums for coffee tables, as against leather-topped mahogany, is a change in form, not substance.) To judge from its present unabated vigor among the newest generation, it would seem that some time must elapse before the hyperbolic extravagances of the imagination as applied to everyday living will begin to pall.

Elsewhere in this country the mechanics of living comprises only the framework within which other events are supposed to occur —like making money or belonging to a golf club, or playing bridge, or doing all the other things that handsome American families are shown doing in automobile ads. But in the West Bronx . . . there it *is* life.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE NAG

Introduction to a Yiddish Masterpiece

MENDELE MOCHER SFORIM

MENDELE MOCHER SFORIM ("Mendele the Bookseller") was the pen name of Shalom Jacob Abramovitch, who is commonly regarded as the father of modern Yiddish literature. How recent that literature is may be gathered from the fact that Mendele was born only one hundred and ten years ago (about 1836). His birthplace was Koplyn, in Lithuania; his father was a rabbi and a pillar of the local community, and Mendele was given a good education that included Hebrew grammar. A precocious student, he attended various yeshivas until he was sixteen, when he left school to join a band of beggars and go wandering about the Pale.

After a time he escaped from the beggars and took refuge in the town of Kamenets Podolsk, where he met a well-known Hebrew and Yiddish poet, Abraham Baer Gottlober, who took an interest in him and brought him in contact with the Haskalah movement.

He began to write in 1857 with an essay in Hebrew on education. Shortly afterwards he moved to Berdichev, where he remained eleven years, working hard at his writing, but in Hebrew alone. In 1864, however, he changed to Yiddish, and it is from this time on that his fame as a writer dates. A series of satirical novels and tales poured from his pen that changed Yiddish into a medium of world literature and opened up perspectives for its artistic exploitation which contemporary writers are still pursuing.

In 1886 Mendele returned to Hebrew, this time more successfully, and here, too, he laid the foundation of a modern literature. After the pogroms of 1905 he traveled in Western Europe for the first time. He died in Odessa in 1917 at the age of eighty-one.

The excerpt we print below constitutes the introduction to Mendele's famous masterpiece *The Nag* (or *The Dobbin*). It was published in Vilna in 1873 and is a sort of novel that recounts the adventures of an old mare harassed by her acquaintances and their ideas. The translation below was made from the Yiddish by Moshe Spiegel.—ED.

THIS is Mendele the Book-Peddler speaking.

Glory be to the Creator for that, after having created all this enormous Universe, He did thereafter take counsel with the host of heavenly Angels and, at the very last, did make a universe-in-little—by which you may understand Man, who is justly styled *olam katan* [a microcosm], inasmuch as man, if you do but look closely at him, combines in himself all species of creatures and creations. You will find in him all possible wild beasts, as well as different breeds of cattle. You will find in him the lizard, the leech, the Spanish fly, the Prussian cockroach, and on top of that, a devil and a werewolf, a clown, a Jew-baiter, and other uncanny foes of man and scourges of God. You will see, as well, among these universes-in-little all sorts of amazing scenes. Here's a tomcat, for instance, playing with a baby-mouse; here's a polecat making its way into a hencoop and twisting the necks of the poor little things; here's a jocko, mimicking and mocking everybody it comes across; here's a dog standing up on its hind legs and wagging its tail for anybody who may throw it a crust; here's a spider, leading a fly astray, enmeshing it, strangling it, and sucking all the juices out of it; here are midges, overtaking

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a passer-by and humming all sorts of secrets in his ears; here are thousands of things no less amazing.

However, that's not at all what I'm leading up to.

GLORY to the Holy Name (I have said) Who contemplates in silence all that is going on in this universe-in-little and still doth not give it the quietus, and for long puts off his wrath, and tolerates transgressions, and evinces not a little mercifulness toward man the imperfect. Properly speaking, I was about to tell you, at this point, of a certain great favor bestowed upon me right after He had, at first, chastised me just a little.

My little nag, kind masters of mine, is no more. My faithful horse, who passed all the days of her life in righteous toil, who served me faithfully and truly, who knew no other books save ours, who could have given pointers in topography to the natives of all the tiny hamlets and cross-road settlements, who was a remarkable connoisseur as to pothouses and little wayside inns, who had, in my company, criss-crossed almost all the pales of Israel, who was personally known to almost all of our Orthodox communities —this horse departed her life one fine day on Lag Beomer, in the town of Glupsk. It is painful to give the reason; poverty, however, is no disgrace; the poor little thing pegged out simply from starvation. Her daily fodder consisted of chopped straw, and only on rare occasions would there fall to her lot a few dry bread-crusts that I bought from beggars who wandered about with sacks over their shoulders. Ah, woe to the horse that falls into the hands of a Jewish bookseller! A wanderer, it wanders without end and labors in all probability more than its mates who draw wares more choice than ours; yet it is supposed to eat practically nothing. A Jewish bookman lives all his life on practically the same footing and, one may say, he himself, with his wife and children, dies from hunger ten times a day. . . .

However, that's not at all what I'm leading up to.

THE Lord (I have said) hath sent me a visitation: I was left without a horse, had nothing to buy another with, and yet right then I had to get to the fairs in time. In short, I was up against it.

And so, there I was, sitting all by myself in the House of Prayer, in low spirits, when suddenly a friend of mine walked in, headed straight for me, and asked:

"Reb Mendele, would you like to buy a nag, maybe?"

"I'd buy it with pleasure," I answered with a sigh, "but where would I get the money?"

"Bah!" said he. "That's no trouble at all. You won't have to pay a copper right now. It's quite possible they'll lend you a little something besides—never fear, they know you're an honest man."

"In that case," I broke in on him, "I'm very willing to buy your nag, and that right now, without any further beating around the bush. Well, let's go, if you please—we'll have a look at what you're selling."

"Why, there's no need of putting yourself out. I have the nag right here, with me—"

"What do you mean, you have it here, with you?" I voiced my astonishment.

"Why, right here—under my coat," my friend smiled.

"Are you laughing at me, or what?" I asked in vexation. "Look for someone else to grin at—your little jokes don't entertain me at all right now."

"God forbid! I'm not joking at all," said the other, and took out from under his coat a whole heap of papers. "You see, Reb Mendele, all this belongs to a certain gentleman, a crony of mine—you'll find his name right on the things which he made up. And, you understand, it is precisely one of his things which bears the name of *The Nag*. The man who made it up is, at the present time—and may this never be said of you!—he is—well, how am I to put it to you? There's nobody home with him, as they say; but nonetheless, we who are his good friends would very much wish to see his stories in print, all right and proper. Whom else were we to turn to in this matter save to you, Reb Mendele, who enjoy so deserved a celebrity in our region? We'd ask you to look through these notebooks quite thoroughly and put them in order; we rely upon you in this respect; you might, however, print *The Nag* first of all. We'll talk over the terms later; I can assure you you won't be out anything. If you need some trifling sum right now, why, we won't hold back over a small amount. Well, now, do you want to do it, Reb Mendele?"

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"Do I? What a question, really! I do want to, with all my heart," I answered, and almost launched into a dance, so overjoyed was I.

Having attended to my trifling affairs, I tackled *The Nag* with full zeal; I looked it over, currycombed it, whipped it together, divided it into chapters and gave each chapter a title of its own, in keeping with its content; in short, I did such work over it as, all by itself, has enabled certain others to put their names on the wrappers of books which weren't theirs, and thus most safely pass for honest-to-goodness authors. In a word, I spared no labor and did my work properly.

And now, gentlemen, just a word or two concerning *The Nag.*

THE NAG is written in a high-flown manner, after the fashion in which the ancients wrote. Each man will understand it in his own way and in keeping with his common sense. For honest folks who don't go grabbing at the stars in the sky, it will be simply a fairy tale, or it's just the story itself that will please them; as for those who fly higher, they, like as not, may find in it a nod at us sinners as well. If you take me, now—well, I with my puny powers have discovered in it all our Jewish little souls and have grasped the secret of their existence in this world. I'm ready to wager that, in turning the pages of this book, many of us, gentlemen—each according to his degree—will exclaim vehemently: "Ouch! Why, this is a parable about our Reb Yossi"; while another will exclaim: "Ouch! Why, this is aimed at our Nusen Reb Heikes"—or "Zalman Yukele Reb Moteles," or "Hershke Reb Abeles," while a third will say: "Ouch, ouch! He has discovered the secret of our poor-box collections, of our benevolent city fathers and all our lovely ways"—and so on and so on.

That's the sort of problem I turned with to the rabbinical judiciary of the town of Glupsk and all the big shots of the grand company thereabouts. "Since, at the time I put out *The Tax,* you know, I promised the public a second part of the said book, and had added no saving reservation about a promise not being a vow—which meant that my word was all by itself as sacred as a vow—therefore, my dear sirs, what's the proper, lawful thing to do now?" I asked them. "I am now publishing this same *Nag*—may I consider that I have fulfilled my promise concerning the second part of *The Tax*?"

Well, they certainly pondered, and then pondered some more; they scratched and scratched behind their ears and, at last, came to a decision:

"YES, Reb Mendele, since we have here nosed out a whiff of *The Tax,* we do hereby release you from your vow. Let *The Nag* be considered the equivalent of your having kept your word, as it were, and as if you had turned out the second part of *The Tax,* with all the things appertaining thereto —things aren't so bad, really, and you can quite fully hit every taste therewith."

How many thanks, then, ought I to render to the All Highest! Had I acquired *The Nag* just so, without any deposit toward the purchase of a horse, it would have been well; had I acquired it with a small deposit, but had it not given off a whiff of *The Tax,* and the rabbinical judiciary had not absolved me of my vow, yet at the same time had not scratched themselves behind their ears—that, too, would have been well; and even if they had scratched themselves, yet I would not have grasped what their reason was—even then it would have been well.

And therefore I ought to render thanks to the All Highest, over and over again, even for that *The Nag* had a whiff of *The Tax* about it, and for that the rabbinical judiciary had released me from my vow, and for that they scratched themselves horribly as they gave me absolution, and for that I know why they scratched themselves and understand that *The Nag,* one must suppose, is worth scratching oneself behind the ear about . . . by way of redemption for all our transgressions.

That, gentlemen, is precisely what I wanted to say right out in my brief foreword. Whatever I have in mind is on the tip of my tongue.

Humbly,
Mendele the Book-Peddler

Written the first day of the month of *Elul,* in a cart loaded with books, on the road between the town of Glupsk [Sillytown] and Teterevka [Grouseville].

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ON THE HORIZON

THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM

How Best to Encourage Art?

HEINZ POLITZER

THE permanent collection of the Jewish Museum consists largely of liturgical objects, from arks of the Torah to spice-boxes. These include rare specimens, more precious than ever since the destruction of the great European centers of Jewish culture.

The arrangement, which reveals taste and method, is according to external considerations: liturgical objects, for example, are arranged according to the holidays on which they are used. Other objects are classified under such categories as "synagogue architecture" and "Jewish music"; and the labeling is careful and informative.

The general principle seems to be that of the *Volkskundemuseum* (museum of folklore): to show the greatest possible number of typical or unusual (i.e. valuable) objects, arranged in such a way that the visitor will take home a maximum of knowledge in return for a minimum of intellectual effort. Schools like to send groups of students to museums of this sort; plain people visit them in the hope of absorbing a little painless education.

The influence of such a collection on the average contemporary city-dweller can hardly be great. To the modern Jew, liturgical objects usually represent little more than a memory of the strange customs of his ancestors. In the mind of the American, these memories tend to be identified with the customs of the "old country," best cast off if one wants to live in modern America.

But one wonders what actual value such a collection can have even for those Jews who remain religious. In a sense, there is one essential contradiction in an exhibition of Jewish sacred objects. In the Jewish religion, these objects were created to serve the needs of worship rather than to *represent*. This is in contrast to the situation in Catholic art, where the liturgical object transcends the place assigned to it in the service and achieves an independent aesthetic value; and may even, in fact, come to serve as a semi-political instrument, designed to impress the non-believing onlooker with the aura of the Catholic faith. Important and highly creative as these tendencies proved in the European art of past centuries, they have no parallel in Judaism.

A collection of Jewish sacred objects is perforce little more than an imitation of similar exhibitions undertaken with much greater legitimacy by other religions or denominations. For Jews, the most such a collection can do is to surround objects that are already

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HISTORICALLY, the Jew is a comparative latecomer to the world of art, and encouragement of art by the organized Jewish community is an even more recent phenomenon. No wonder then that no subject is more debatable—and debated—than what Jewish art is and what the best course is to stimulate its creation and appreciation. HEINZ POLITZER, who has written art criticism in Vienna, Tel Aviv, and, most lately, in this country, here gives his personal appraisal of perhaps the most ambitious effort yet undertaken on behalf of Jewish art, the Jewish Museum of New York, founded two years ago. Mr. Politzer was born in Vienna in 1910, and emigrated to Palestine in 1938. He has been in this country about a year, teaching German at Bryn Mawr. This article has been translated from the German by Ralph Manheim.

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familiar to the believer with the aura of history; and whatever hints of an original artistic achievement may be found here and there among these liturgical objects is submerged, both for the religious and the non-religious Jew, in the thought of the ritual *purpose* they serve in the traditional service of worship. As art, they have only the most secondary interest or value.

EVEN for the religious, how likely is it that the path to a renewal of Jewish art will be found in the production of modern ritual objects? Numerous such objects have been produced in the New Bezalel Art School in Jerusalem, some of them in excellent taste; a short while ago some examples were on exhibit in the Jewish Museum. Nevertheless modern ecclesiastical art, regardless of denomination, faces a paradoxical situation in the modern world. Undoubtedly, even in our day, liturgy retains a certain force, from the quality of the ancient and venerable, of the historic, and sometimes even of the magical, that clings to it. However, the religious revival we have been witnessing in recent times, whether in Kierkegaard, in "crisis theology," or in Franz Rosenzweig and Martin Buber, is, for the most part, either outrightly anti-liturgical or hostile to the sectarian character of any specific liturgy. The contemporary attitude highlights the direct personal *confrontation* of the modern believer with the divine, Buber's "dialogical situation." This carries with it either a rejection of liturgical trappings or an indifference to the form of religious ceremonial, which may just as well be that of one denomination as of another, provided only it serves to re-create the fundamental relation between man and God. This is the essential implication, for example, when Franz Rosenzweig says, "Bring Bach into the synagogue!" Thus for the modern believer liturgical paraphernalia have little meaning: the historical objects are largely of sentimental value, while the modern ones have only aesthetic interest.

As for the modern nationalist-minded Jew, there is inevitably a basic falsity in his regard for Jewish religious symbols. Undeniably, the political developments of the last few years have led to an increased interest in Jewish objects, an interest which the Jewish Museum has fairly well exploited. But for the modern Jewish activist the value of the ritual object is something other than—something really diametrically opposed to—its liturgical character. *In hoc signo vinces:* whether the symbol is the Cross or the Menorah, it has, in the course of recent political struggles, lost all connection with the reality of faith; it is the symbol of a weapon. For the nationalist Jew to preserve liturgical objects, not to speak of creating new ones, is a fundamental contradiction—even a sacrilege.

It is too soon to say whether the newly awakened Jewish national consciousness will create a secular symbol that will be an artistic expression of Israel's uniqueness as a nation. It is certain that such attempts as the model for a monument to the fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto, to which an entire room in the Museum was devoted for quite a time, reveal all the worst features of sentimental nationalism: pretentiousness without backbone, *shmaltz* as a substitute for marble. Certainly this shallow symbolism, this feeble theatricality, contains no aesthetic quality. Beyond its supposed timeliness, there was no reason for showing such a work; it had as much place in a Jewish museum as the cheap bust of a Greek irredentist in a museum of Hellenic art.

THE room devoted to synagogue architecture and its history is an exception amid this general lifelessness. At certain times in the past the synagogue was what modern architects are apparently trying to make of it again, a kind of community center (although the place of women, and consequently of the family, in modern synagogues will have to be re-defined according to modern conditions and the standards of Western civilization). Undeniably, both as an institution and as an architectural entity, the synagogue maintains an intimate relationship with modern Jewish life, on ordinary days as well as holidays; and this offers ample scope for discussion and creativity.

It is therefore regrettable that one of the most significant among present-day Jewish architects, Eric Mendelsohn, is now represented in the Jewish Museum only by a single sketch. (Other examples of his work were on exhibit earlier.) To this writer, Mendelsohn seems a specifically Jewish artist insofar as landscape has little or no meaning for him; he forces his intellectual will upon it. Those

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of Mendelsohn's buildings that I have seen in Palestine are all imposed on the landscape, not wrested from it; their character is dominating, sober, expressive of clear strength. In his gift of invention, his articulation, his simplicity, Mendelsohn strikes me as a modern master who is soundly and powerfully based on tradition.

The Museum has a children's section, and this should surely have something to say about the future. If we think of such large exhibitions of children's art as the drawings by French children shown last year at the Museum of Modern Art, we realize how very much these spontaneous little works have contributed to the interpretation and sometimes even to the development of modern art. In addition, the art of American Jewish children would afford us excellent evidence for reading the relation between tradition and adaptation to environment in their group identification. For the moment, unfortunately, the children's rooms are taken up with old stage sets and "historical" costumes for a children's play, and also with children's books that owe their present popularity far more to their nationalist and religious subject matter than to any artistic value of their make-up, which is completely old-fashioned. (However, as I write, a children's art show is in prospect as the next exhibit in the rooms on the street floor.)

In this section, devoted to temporary exhibits, a number of paintings and sculptures donated to the state of Israel by American artists have recently been on exhibition. Political art exhibits are always wretched: non-artistic purposes cannot help but negate and blur aesthetic value, and the result here is academicism, and petty personal ambition run wild. The "American Artists for Israel" show revealed the indirection and shapelessness of a random cross-section of the studios of New York and its environs. It was a miniature Tower of Babel of modern artistic production, ranging from good old impressionism all the way to the abstract symbol. The only connection between this show and the state of Israel or the Jews was the adventitious fact that it consisted of pictures that would some day no longer be in New York but in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, or Ain Harod. Although the exhibition presented Gentile as well as Jewish contributions, a Palestinian art student or enthusiast could learn no more from it about his American contemporaries than the beholder on this side of the ocean would learn about the integration of the Jew in modern American art.

These pictures were collected both by Jewish and non-Jewish friends of Israel, as a token of solidarity "with the creative forces of Israel who, while fighting violently to achieve their goal, have not in this struggle forgotten the verities of life, and have laid the foundation of an integrated art and culture." The pictures to which these inflated words refer constituted an equally inflated gesture. But admittedly, the exhibition was not really designed to prove anything but the good will of some more or less progressive American artists toward the new state of Israel. It was not meant to advance artistic ideas or a cultural program. It was a political gesture; simply that; and nothing more.

THE next exhibit at the Museum, sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society, was also a political gesture—intended "to record the role played by the Jewish people in the historical development of America from the time of discovery to date."

Taken together, and compared with each other, these two exhibitions clearly revealed a deep insecurity on the part of those who had arranged them. The first presented to the new state of Israel a gift whose actual value to the young nation was never taken into serious consideration. It was a formal bow and, on the part of the Jewish contributors, a sort of ticket of indulgence. The second show tried to assure America of the loyalty of her Jewish citizens by stressing their historical share in the upbuilding of the commonwealth.

Though this writer is a newcomer to America, he cannot help but consider this latter kind of effort thoroughly un-American. To his mind America does not ask of the groups that constitute her that they bring to attention the contributions they have made to the general welfare. I do not even know whether America asks of her minority groups that they do something for America; rather she seems to expect them to do things for *themselves,* and thereby for *all* Americans. To exhibit "the original astronomic tables compiled by Abraham Zacuto and used by Columbus," or "the manuscript of the dedication exercises of Congregation Mikve Israel of Philadel-

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phia, Pa. (1782), in which is offered a prayer for George Washington" implies a claim for an equality that is conceded anyway and only made questionable by being claimed. To harp on contributions to the nation that are of necessity as accidental as they are self-evident reminds us of the sense of inferiority that European Jews used to reveal in their attitude to state authorities: "Since we are so useful you ought to tolerate us." If it does nothing else, this exhibition exposes to view the distance some American Jews still have to cover between their fears and the concept of democracy plainly offered them by America.

BOTH exhibitions at the Jewish Museum were then pseudo-political displays in the guise of history, and some art. There still remains the question of Jewish art *per se*, a question the Jewish Museum was intended originally to raise—if not to answer.

A year ago the Museum showed some pictures by the Palestinian painter Mordecai Ardon-Bronstein. Here we had the work of a gifted artist who applied the orientation and technique of modern art to the Palestinian landscape and his own free vision; an analytical artist, self-conscious, suffering from his self-awareness. His work was full of questions without answers, problematic and for that very reason representative. Freud had played a part in producing these paintings—yet they did not portray the unconscious, but adhered even in their visions to an object. Kierkegaard played his part—yet this was not religious painting, but painting entirely for the sake of painting; and Kafka played his—yet it was not literature, but loneliness, rebellion, lamentation turned to color. The Palestinian locale seemed divested of all national accent; to the painter it represented only the problems of painting, the question of Mediterranean light and shade, the problems of color transitions and form. His portraits represented human characters and situations, Jewish solely in the tragic irony with which they were portrayed. For behind the cultural heritage, the craftsmanship, the problem, stood a man who had suffered the history of our days on his own skin, a man hunted over the face of the earth but unbroken, and this man had come from a little city in Eastern Europe, where from his father and his neighbors he had absorbed Jewishness into his being. All this was hidden in his work, it never became explicit but could be surmised in the curve or breaking of a line, in this form or that high-light; it was an essential part of Bronstein's human substance, not merely something said in the catalogue.

Modern Jewish art is no more limited to the representation of Jewish themes than to the revival of Jewish ritual accessories. Max Lieberman was a great Jewish artist; he did not seek out Jewish subject matter and his work still retains its freshness. Marc Chagall, who translated Eastern Jewish subjects into the language of post-expressionism, is beginning to lose his impact precisely because, seduced by the charm of his subject matter, he has evaded the strictly artistic problems raised by his own pictures. The exotic, anecdotal element in his work helped more than a little to make Chagall famous; but today he is losing his hold on the more discerning public because he has failed to continue that exploration of the inherent problems of painting to which his art owed its essential originality in the beginning.

THE Jewish art of the present is an expression of the situation in which the Jew finds himself today. Accordingly, it is a question rather than an answer, a questioning of the social, intellectual, and even religious contexts from which the modern Jew has fallen, or fears to fall. The safeguards of tradition are shattered or stretched to the breaking point: the modern Jewish artist finds himself utterly alone with himself and his work. Thus he has become the prototype of the modern artist, or one might say, the modern artist has become a Jew. For modern man, if he has been awake in this period, has suffered the fate of the Jew in foreboding and anxiety, if not in reality: the isolation, the vain search for the right way, the persecution without cause, the closed door, the collapse of authority, the lost years. Everyman has become a Jew, the Jew has become Everyman.

It is in this equation of the creative city-dweller with the modern Jew that the opportunity of the Jewish Museum lies. It is understandable that an institution devoted to the study of traditional doctrine should wish to preserve tradition. On the other hand, it is characteristic of Jewish religious thought that it has always subjected its object—man

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and his relation to the powers around him and over him—to questioning. And today it is quite possible, now that the existence of the thinking man as such has become a question, that a good many modern men will enter a Jewish Museum simply in order to seek the counsel of their fellow-sufferers and the sustenance of beauty. I have in mind modern men who have nothing in common with Jewry but their precarious position as individuals amid mass forces, the knowledge of this precarious position and the desire to overcome it.

THE Jewish Museum is situated on Fifth Avenue, a few steps away from the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Non-Objective Art, and not so very far from the Museum of Modern Art. The building that houses it is a 19th-century mansion, some fifty years old, in an amiably neutral upper-class neighborhood, highly respectable and very conscious of its own respectability. Put another way: the Museum is a Jewish bridgehead located in one of the "best" neighborhoods in New York, one that is also a museum quarter. Here Jewish culture can hope to obtain a hearing both from the Jewish and non-Jewish world.

The Museum's rooms are moderately large, moderately light, well laid out, and susceptible to further alteration. The Gothic gewgaws and other ornamentation in *art nouveau* style, dating from the period in which the building was erected, have in part been adroitly concealed and can be fully eliminated in time. There is a lecture hall well suited to discussion of the problems raised by the exhibits. Here modern Jewish music might well be performed and modern Jewish literature read and discussed. Such an institution is suited to a living exchange with the outside world. Too bad that we have had as yet only what is by and large a complacent—at least on the surface—exhibition of Jewish conservatism.

The very tension inherent in a living exchange with the outside world offers a subject well suited to a museum. Particularly because it was so decisively interrupted, the history of German-Jewish relations is deserving of a comprehensive exhibit that need not be limited to paintings and sculpture. And the dialectical relation that is now beginning to develop between American and Palestinian youth might also be illustrated and interpreted by exhibitions; and as far as its artistic expression is concerned, this relation might even be significantly influenced.

In the interval between the end of the recent world war and the termination of the mandate, the interest of young Palestinian artists was mainly attracted to the great European centers, Rome, Paris, London. There can be little doubt that, under the impact of recent history, some of this interest could be easily turned toward American Jewish institutions—that is, if they were in existence, and if they were willing and able to compete with European culture. At the same time, there are quite a few young Palestinian artists who deserve to be publicized by the American Jewish Museum, for their own art's sake as well as for the enlightenment of Americans. The Museum could easily bring about a legitimate rapprochement and a genuine discussion between American and Israeli artists, if only it abandoned its clumsy pseudo-political level and dealt with art on the basis of aesthetic values.

In its Jewish Museum, the Theological Seminary possesses a great opportunity, but it cannot be said as yet to have shown full appreciation of its possibilities. If it is true that the specific problem of the modern Jew and the problem of modern man are closely related—and the American reputation of a Jewish writer like Franz Kafka argues for the truth of this supposition—this is the time and place for an experiment that may lead to a new interpretation of Jewish as well as modern art. And in the course of time the experiment might even go further and lead to the emergence of a Jewish art that is both modern and American.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

PROPHETS, PRIESTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

The Sociology of Religion and the Religion of Sociology

ALBERT SALOMON

SO GREAT is modern man's faith in the potentialities of science that he takes it for granted that the science of sociology must have much of importance to say concerning religion; and so estranged is modern man from the religiosity of the past, that he is quite certain that religion can have nothing worthwhile to say about society. That this is so can be verified by even a casual glance at any college curriculum or syllabus. In the history of Western civilization, this is a relatively recent development. After all, religion has been a part of human experience for centuries, whereas sociology is an upstart. Yet so complete has sociology's victory been, that any critic of the present situation is dismissed as an "obscurantist" or "eccentric." Be that as it may. . . .

Actually, so low is the standing of religion in academic circles that the specifically American tradition of empirical social science has apparently not even thought it a subject worthy of systematic study. There are scattered studies in American sociological and psychological literature of the way communicants of different faiths differ from one another with regard to such matters as neurosis, intelligence, wealth, and so on. But this sort of inquiry does little beyond determining the impingement of religion on some other social categories; it obviously has little interest or concern with the phenomenon of religion itself. Here the main contributions have come from the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, who studied the meaning of religion by way of primitive religion in his *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (reprinted, in 1948, by the Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois), and the German sociologist Max Weber, who studied the great historical religions in their impact on social life, as well as the personal and social structure of specific religious phenomena such as inspiration, prophecy, grace, and salvation in many of his writings (some of these are in English in *From Max Weber,* translations by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, Oxford, 1947). The closest approach to a sociology of religion in American sociology is in such writers as Talcott Parsons, who have concentrated on the interpretation of Durkheim and Weber to an American audience.

IT WOULD be, fundamentally, a rather sterile procedure simply to pit religion against sociology or vice versa: the relationship between the two is more complicated than that, and it is exactly this relationship which, when examined closely, yields some unexpected results. For while there is a profound antagonism between sociology and religion, there are also profound affinities.

Religion has traditionally claimed to express an inner relation to a being beyond and higher than ourselves. It takes itself to be a primary

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IN THE past fifty years, sociology has made a strong and increasingly successful bid for recognition as a scientific discipline alone capable of arriving at the truth concerning all aspects of human life, including religion. ALBERT SALOMON, distinguished sociologist and scholar, here suggests that the social scientists have thrown little genuine light on religion and have often rather been engaged in offering substitute religions of their own. Mr. Salomon, who was born in Berlin in 1891, received his PhD from Heidelberg University. He has done extensive research in the sociology of knowledge and has contributed to a number of professional journals. He is at present a professor of sociology at the New School.

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phenomenon which in the last analysis is irreducible to anything else, be it science or poetry. Religious men consider the whole of reality as a unity impregnated with a divine meaning. But within the religious framework two distinct perspectives emerge: the perspective of the "visionary" and that of the ecclesiastic, that of prophet and that of priest.

The visionary is the man who founds and refreshens religions. In Hegel's terminology, he opens the window into eternity. He is a man of mystical vision who intuitively experiences the infinite—his is the spiritual capital which all religions draw upon and expend. But there are also religious men who insist on translating the vision into more common terms and on applying it to the workaday world. Whereas the visionary stresses the radical contrast between the *communion* of men with the divine and the *community* of men in society, the ecclesiastic attempts to locate the holy in the profane. Where the visionary is acutely sensitive to the ultimate precariousness of any realization of the divine in social institutions, the ecclesiastic is impelled toward the identification of the divine with a church, a man, a sacred text, a state, or some other concrete form.

So an opposition arises between the visionary, the man of the original insight, and, on the other side, the priest, theologian, and ecclesiastic, who take the primary spiritual experiences as given and preoccupy themselves with the erection of creeds and institutions. Both types are integral to the religious life. The visionary busies himself with the divine, and with the human as a reflection of the divine; the ecclesiastic is busy arranging compromises with intellectual and social necessities in the world.

It is in the figure of the ecclesiastic and his works that religion may be most readily seen as a historical phenomenon properly lending itself to sociological analysis. The ecclesiastic attempts to identify the city of man with the city of God, and, since the socially conditioned can never be recreated in the image of the metaphysically unconditioned, this attempt is bound to fail. With regard to this failure, sociology can tell us how a theological creed became the ideological weapon of a certain class; it can describe the role religious institutions have played in social conflict; it can analyze how, and to what degree, ideal values become subordinate to material ends. In other words, sociology can and does relate the drama of *the defeat of the religious intention.*

However, in the person of the visionary, the case is different. The religious visionary claims to possess immediately an ultimate truth, transcending all historical and sociological frames of reference. And here sociology and religion are in irreconcilable conflict, for science, too, claims to serve the one truth. The visionary obtains his truth from divine revelation. The sociologist insists that all truths derive from intellectual analysis and experiment upon a universe which is completely intelligible in terms of physical, social, and psychological processes. Between these two radical assertions there can be ultimately neither compromise nor mediation. To take a specific example: is Jewish history to be explained in the same way as the history of any other people, or is it inexplicable except in relation to a divine intention? Both interpretations are available to us, but they are mutually exclusive. Sociology, simply by being a natural science, cannot ever conceivably admit that Jewish history is anything but entirely secular history; to do otherwise would represent an act of suicide.

WITHIN the last fifty years, however, the pretensions of science have come under closer scrutiny, and it is becoming more and more evident that science, including the science of sociology, is itself built upon untested and untestable metaphysical premises. The recognition of this fact has had little effect on the physical sciences, which do, after all, "work," even if they no longer pretend to give us absolute truths about the nature of reality. For sociology this is much more damaging, since sociology has never been able to justify itself by its "works"; instead it has received its prestige second-hand from the supposed authority of scientific method to find out the real truth.

With the realization that the so-called scientific theories of sociology have no claim to "absolute" or "neutral" truth, sociology suffers the same fate as did the church when *its* claim to absolute truth was disputed by science—sociology becomes an object of study for sociology. Sociologists then sit down to study how and why the sociological theories of their predecessors, considered at the time to be scientific truths, came to be "ideologies" serving specific social and political forces; how, for instance, the sociological theory of the state in 19th-century Germany reflected the situation of the German bourgeoisie or aristocracy, or the Marxian theory served the Soviet dictatorship, for

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Marxism too claimed to be "scientific" sociology. Sociology here is relating *the defeat of the scientific intention,* just as before it related the defeat of the religious ideal.

But, under these circumstances, sociology exposes itself as an object of study for the religious mind, too. As a matter of fact, religions have always viewed science as a rival faith, suspecting sociology of the ambition to set itself up to be, so to speak, the pretender-messiah of modern mankind. For just as every religion leaps from elemental individual experiences to universal meanings, so sociology, especially in its early forms, made the jump from scientific methods to humanitarian values and from these in turn to visions of social salvation. Possessed of *Weltanschauungen* rather than dogmatic creeds, the vision of perpetual progress instead of the hope of personal immortality, it became, and in effect still remains, a "religion of humanity."

IN SOCIOLOGY, the diseases of our civilization—and this the founders of sociology knew right well—are inevitably exposed. These men recognized that no stable civilization required a sociology—because it possessed a fixed and unchanging center of belief, and a fixed horizon toward which all its members aspired together. That is why neither the classical nor the medieval worlds developed a sociology; scholars in both ages (who, it may be granted, were as perceptive and intelligent as our modern PhD's) concerned themselves with broad truths about the cosmos which they accepted *a priori,* and from which they deduced truths about man and his community, regarding these latter as chiefly important not for themselves, but as infinitesimal instances of universal verities.

Sociology, in contrast, confines its interest to man and his society, setting these up as the be-all and end-all of inquiry. Furthermore, it makes the revolutionary gesture of surrendering the ancient religio-metaphysical concern and limiting itself to human affairs and their management. This renunciation of the cosmos in favor of the social scene was made by the founding fathers of sociology (Saint-Simon, Marx, Comte, Durkheim, *et al.*) with a stated and express purpose in view—the discovery of those scientific procedures that would enable men to predict and control the processes of social reform and social transformation. Mankind, Karl Marx asserted, would leap "from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom" without the assistance of a messiah, and before the "end of days," and Auguste Comte was of the same mind. Thus there came into being the *religion of sociology,* a humanistic religion which would accomplish on earth what previous religions had promised in heaven, which would have man redeemed by himself and not by God—a religion which lives so potently in all sociological thinking, and which has been so vital in the spiritual experience of modern man.

For it can be demonstrated that each great sociological system, while it starts by limiting its horizon to this world and adopting the rigors of scientific method as its philosophical basis, ends with a new religion. Surprising as this may seem, the transition is logical and inescapable. Scientific method, while it furnishes descriptions of social processes and techniques for achieving goals, is perforce silent as to directions and ends—that is, the *raison d'être* of the goal itself. This must be supplied from some other source than the observable and measurable fact—and this lack is what the "system-building" sociologist undertakes to fill. He constructs a *theory* of human emotions and values to serve as guide to the technician, and so "religions of progress" come into being, atheistic and socialistic religions, like Auguste Comte's "religion of humanity" and Saint-Simon's "new Christianity"—religions ministered to by sociologists rather than priests; "religions" in that they wish to refashion the world according to some idea of perfection and not merely to report on what exists. These "religions" of sociology have been secular religions, in that they have tried to bring about salvation in this world by elaborating schemes that would ensure final harmony and continuity in the social process.

Sociology has, indeed, always been more than a set of theories and techniques for understanding the thoughts and acts of modern men. From its very origins, all of its methods, from the statistical to the interpretive, cooperate toward the achievement of a shared goal: the comprehension *and* improvement of modern industrial societies and the lot of modern man. This goal was explicitly avowed in the early days of sociology, when the citizens of the new-born industrial order dared to hope that scientific progress might bring the millennium. It is less visible today, when sociology is primarily an academic discipline. But the ambition and the pretension are still there, nevertheless; and they wield a profound influence, not only in the universities, but in literature, social planning, politics, and in many of the religious denominations.

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IT IS of special interest to observe how large has been the role of Jews in this, the new peculiar church of modern man. It was among young Jews that Auguste Comte and Saint-Simon found their followers. Emile Durkheim, for example, who was much more a disciple of Comte than he himself was prepared to admit, and who made religion itself an object of "scientific inquiry" (an endeavor in which he far surpassed both Malinowski and Pareto who came after him), was the son of a rabbi. He is in many ways a classic example of the sociologist of religion.

What was it that Durkheim had to say? Durkheim argued first of all on behalf of the *symbolic* quality of the sacred: the Holy was to him primarily a sense of moral obligation to society, a piety toward social authority. More profoundly considered, it was—and this is the key concept in his sociology—the collective social consciousness, which Durkheim identified with the absolute, the divine. Society was God.

Once the divine and the social were equated, there took place a repetition of that pattern of thought to which Durkheim, as the son of a rabbi, was habituated from youth—except that God, the old hero of the tale, yielded the scepter to his successor, society. It was now society which was the source and goal of salvation; where once the divine design had been discerned, there was now detected an immanent progress in man's collective life. The kingdom of God—good, old Jewish dream—is reasserted, but in the here and now, without supra-natural intervention and reference. And as for the sanction for this new faith, science and technical progress take the place of revelation—except that science here has been smuggled out of the laboratory and transformed into a myth.

Nor was Durkheim alone in converting the old Jewish messianism into a new "scientific" eschatology. This was the occupation of most of the young Jews who were conspicuous among the disciples of Comte and Saint-Simon; from among them, incidentally, came almost all of France's leading sociologists. In countries other than France, too, Jews could be noted among the apostles of the new pseudo-religion of sociology. Karl Mannheim, the German, for instance. In him one finds deep humanitarian sympathies, a profound, passionate enthusiasm for mankind and its salvation, for the "Third Way" (his capitals), that synthesis of freedom and planning to which he looked for human deliverance. And with this fervor goes an insistence on the scientific in general, and scientific sociology in particular, as solvent of all problems, as the sole and universal key to the gate of the good life on earth.

The religion of sociology has become at one and the same time a universal religion and also peculiarly American. It appears that today among many American sociologists their science has become their religion, which, if they had their way, would be erected into the unofficially established national church (they are, for libertarian reasons, opposed to official churches). To this state of mind contributions have been made by all the forces and tendencies operative in Europe, plus one more. Thanks to its special heritage with its accent on optimism, there is in America a strong attachment to the vision of the kingdom of God on earth, whether religiously or secularly envisaged. The influence of the Calvinistic tradition of pragmatic spirituality (the good life by good works) predisposes Americans to cast about for techniques, to invent tools for the attainment of their ideas. As a result, the sociological approach has become an integral part of the American mind, combining social theory and the technical sciences in order to attain happiness in modern society.

THE sociology of religion is a far cry from the religion of sociology and has an altogether different history behind it, the line running from Fontenelle and Bayle, through Montesquieu, Gibbon, and Voltaire, to Max Weber.

It was Fontenelle and Bayle who first in modern times—in the late 17th and early 18th centuries—ventured to apply rationalistic thought in a systematic fashion to religion. In this enterprise they were anything but unprejudiced. Their purpose was not to make an objective analysis of religion but to expose its final irrationality and unintelligibility, and to establish all creeds as pre-rational modes of scientific explanation, outmoded and inconsequential in the modern world. The sociology of religion came into existence with an *odium theologicum*.

Montesquieu approached religion altogether as a social scientist, concerned not at all with its inner content but only with its impact on the conduct of the individual and the group. This method treats religion as a historical phenomenon, a social fact, an influence, both constructive and destructive, on political and economic behavior. It is weighed according to whether it strengthens or weakens political institutions, enriches or impoverishes commercial

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and industrial resources. Voltaire observed that human interests make history and that religion is merely one of these interests. To this thesis Max Weber, at the turn of the 19th century, added the notion of man as a meaning-seeking creature who, unable to content himself with the possession of things and the acquisition of power, is forever fabricating assurances of moral and spiritual election.

Max Weber was an interesting and paradoxical thinker, who, in reaction to Marxism and positivistic sociology, tried to establish the autonomy of religion—only to destroy his own structure, and end up with an even more radical positivism. Weber set out by carefully drawing the line between spiritual experience and sociological subject matter. In the realm of primary religious experiences, where spiritual revolutions are effected and new religions founded, the sociologist is an alien. His work begins only when spiritual movements have settled, when ecclesiastical institutions have been established, and when he can inquire into the effects of legal and economic forces on religious institutions, or into the clash between spiritual and secular powers. Out of these investigations, he may be able to throw light on the vulnerability of spiritual gospels when caught in the gears of power politics. Yet Weber could not abide by his own rules, and inevitably so. A commitment to science cannot be hedged, and scientific method cannot, by its nature, recognize sacred, inviolable precincts—*all* must in the end be explained. Man, for Weber, is only a "meaning-manipulating animal," dissatisfied with mere material achievement, who wishes to be *entitled* to his happiness and to *deserve* his success. In Weber's three volumes on the sociology of religion, religion is reduced to one factor among many, especially important in times of social crisis. That is, for Weber religion is ultimately, and in the nature of the case, "ideology"—a man-made and man-manipulated tool.

This is more or less openly acknowledged by the distinguished Harvard sociologist Talcott Parsons, a follower of Weber, when he asserts that people regard the life of the spirit either as theologians or as scientists, and that only *the latter* has warrant. Basic to the *method* of the sociology of religion—and regardless of any personal sentiments on the part of the sociologists themselves—is the thesis that religion is merely one among the elements of civilization, and that it can be adequately accounted for by the detached analysis of the social scientist.

The visionary *per se* has only one report to make—that God exists and that he awaits man's turning toward him. But there is also the type of what might be called the "spiritual thinker" or religious philosopher—one who accepts divine revelation as true and yet is sufficiently secular to be able to abstract himself from the religious situation in order to survey the history of humanity and its religions. Such men exist in a state of permanent tension, committed to one revealed truth, yet not blind to the passionate and profound claims of other religions, and, indeed, of scientific rationalism itself. They are the living and distressed witnesses to the fact that God and the world are no longer, and not yet, one.

Just as the sociologist applies his "truth" to religion, so the spiritual thinker can and does apply his "truth" to the social order. Where the sociologist accounts for—and explains away—the history of religious movements as the inevitable upshot of social forces, the spiritual thinker interprets them further in terms of sin or degeneracy, of virtue and redemption. Both consider the same facts, but in different perspectives and with different vocabularies. The sociologist remains within the process of social action, organizing his findings in terms of causal analysis. The spiritual thinker, perilously balanced on the margin between the divine and the secular, refers the human condition to a redeeming and saving God. For the spiritual thinker, human action and conduct always are related to a divine being whose commands are constitutive elements in the spiritual adventure of mankind.

Recently, a significant volume has appeared which accepts the religious vision as not only one among many motivations of culture, history, and society, but as the final and primary constituent. In his *Abendlaendische Eschatologie* (A. Francke Verlag, Bern, 1947), Jacob Taubes suggests that the key intellectual and social values of the Western world take their origin and power from the messianic vision. His work is a comparative typology of the messianic pattern as established by the Jewish prophets, taken up in the revolt of the Franciscans of the 13th century, by the founders of German philosophical idealism, and finally by the antithetical doctrines of Kierkegaard and Marx. He finds that it was the messianic vision which made possible all theories of progress, reformation, and revolution in modern times. Its stamp is even discernible, though not in its own name,

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on the atheistic revolutions of the industrial world of today.

Writing from his marginal position, Taubes can see religion from within and from without. From without, religion is certainly only a part of civilization. But religion brings something into being which transcends the frontiers of civilization, and establishes itself as civilization's very ground: it brings into being that which is *within* religion—the meeting of man with God as the root of human destiny. For Taubes, religion is the primary phenomenon of human life, for it is the religious experience which describes the circumference of meaning for human history and human society.

It should be emphasized that the spiritual thinker is not to be confused with the theologian. The latter philosophizes within ecclesiastical institutions and on the platform of their accepted doctrinal paraphernalia—they constitute his unchallenged premises. The spiritual thinker returns to and proceeds from the root religious experiences which he knows at first hand. He is, therefore, an uncompromising radical, for he knows not only the externals of ecclesiastical institutions, but their inner logic and necessity. Sharing the primal passion behind organized religion, he is capable of a thorough disrespect for religious institutions.

For the spiritual thinker, the Jewish prophets set the precedent. They turned the religious ardor that burned in them into a ruthless exposure of man's weakness and the sinfulness of all social institutions, including religious institutions. In the Christian world of nascent modern civilization, the Franciscan Spirituals played the same role, transforming the words of prophetic personalities into a collective revolutionary movement. By virtue of their messianic hope, they saw very clearly the sins that were degrading all institutions, the church most especially, into sordid business enterprises. Nor were they content merely to catalogue and announce offenses whereby the ecclesia and ecclesiastics were corrupted. They went further, tracing the evils against which they inveighed to the power-lust and cupidity, the thirst for prestige and privilege that degraded the clergy and caused them to subordinate spiritual aims to power politics. It was these Franciscan Spirituals who evolved, out of their spirituality, the first thoroughgoing analysis in modern times of the process of social change, particularly of social degeneration.

Erasmus of Rotterdam provides us with an outstanding example of a marginal spiritual thinker at work. On the one hand, he is awake to the reality of absolute moral and social principles, astir with an ineffable love for the Divine. On the other, embracing standards of natural and spiritual reason, he is able to explain from first-hand experience why men, though they profess these standards, depart from them so often and widely. His so-called satirical works are really sociological analyses devoted to describing the processes whereby men know the truth and may still elect error. His *Praise of Folly*, in particular, is one of the few truly wise inquiries into the role, constructive and destructive, of man's unconscious and irrational powers. A further instance of the radicalism of that social criticism which can spring from participation in key religious insights is Erasmus's sociology of opinion. Repeatedly, in the preface to his editions of the Church Fathers, he stated that the basic verities of the Gospel were simple and unambiguous, that if they evolved into complex dogmatic systems it was under the pressure of hostile and contending sects, themselves often "fronts" for other forces.

Erasmus's *Consultatio de Bello Turcico* dealt realistically with such down-to-earth topics as the hidden motives behind the proposed crusade against the Turks, the role of bankers and speculators in sugar in whipping up the war sentiment, the interrelation between domestic crisis and foreign policy. At the same time, this grim, penetrating sociological analysis is of universal import, and is written from a vantage-point of absolute spiritual values supplied by religious doctrine. The spiritual thinker is able to detect and explain the corruption and depravity of man because in his absolute principles—and the saints who embody them—he has an ever present canon of what ought to be, what can be. Little wonder, then, that it was Erasmus, loyal to absolute religious ideals of goodness, who formulated the Law of Degeneracy—the thesis that all social institutions, including religious institutions, are driven by their desire to survive into programs of self-entrenchment and self-aggrandizement, in the course of which their original faiths and ideals are perverted and abandoned.

The Erasmian procedure whereby sociological observation and spiritual vision interact to form one organic, perceptive whole has become

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a fruitful tradition since his time. Among the scholars molded by it was Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714), who was "re-discovered" for our own time by Leo Tolstoy. In a book which has become a model for the writing of social history, the *Impartial History of Churches and Heretics,* Arnold wrote with all of those empirical techniques which modern sociology exhibits at its best, and yet also from the standpoint of a Protestant mystic. This enabled him to see organized Christianity steadily and as a whole, its destructive as well as its constructive aspects, the power of vested interests and self-preservation in determining its policies. He perceived that ruling bodies of churches will inevitably be suspicious of any spontaneous rediscovery of the verities on which they rest, that they will seek to outlaw such spontaneity as heretical or disruptive of the established order, that they will forever equate the living spirit of revelation with their interests, and that all this is an inescapable law of human institutions.

In our time, spiritual thinkers are represented by such men as Reinhold Niebuhr, Charles Péguy, Leonard Ragaz, Gabriel Marcel, and others, all of whom base their analyses of the social order on their religious premises. The consequence is, as in the case of Niebuhr, an analysis of modern society equal in its radicalism to that of Marx, but proceeding from an altogether different source. An extraordinarily interesting modern representative is to be found in Georg Lukácz, the brilliant Hungarian Marxist, who insists on the necessity of the socialist revolution as a prelude to the true "end of days." For, Lukácz argued, until that revolution is over and done with, men will never be able to experience that radical despair which is a prelude to their salvation. Only when the perfect social machine has been actualized, only after all men are properly housed, clothed, fed, and still find themselves lost, wretched and unredeemed, only then—in the depth of their disillusionment—will they perceive that technology is unable to save, and will they be forced into genuine spirituality. It was of spiritual revolution that Lukácz dreamed, that crisis of the individual soul which would come after the crisis of society had been successfully surmounted. Then, and not until then, would the veil of historicism be penetrated, and men would be able to part that curtain of political and economic amelioration which they mistook for the kingdom of Heaven. Then, and not until then, would they be free, indeed compelled, to consider, open-eyed and undistracted, the things of eternity. This was Lukácz's position before he joined the Communist party.

Out of this discussion a question arises: is there, can there be, in any serious sense, a sociology of religion?

We have seen that the spiritual vision, spanning finite and infinite, has time and again led to highly articulate and meaningful analyses of human society. Religion has continually furnished a background against which an understanding of given parts could be set; because of its transcendent insights, it has made possible meaningful discoveries concerning the human scene. In other words, the spiritual vision demonstrates its capacity to establish general truths about man and the social order.

On the other hand it should be apparent that sociology cannot, in the usual sense of the word, yield any knowledge of religion. About the evolution of religion, yes. About religious institutions, practices, externalities—even some internalities—yes. Insofar as religion expresses itself in social processes, sociology can handle it. But this means that there can be no sociology of religion but only of irreligion. Sociologists may be able to explain the motives and causes which impel people to accept at second hand the beliefs of other men or to surrender convictions they once held; to adopt or bargain away creeds and churches; to compromise religious requirements with political actualities. They may be able to describe the flourishing and degeneration of religions, their rise and decline as state churches. All this sociology can do, and make valuable contributions to religious history.

From this, however, there flows the classic blunder of modern, scientific, secular civilization concerning religion: the assumption that religion is just one other cultural motif, like some particular technology or philosophy, fully revealed in its social-historical expressions. Whereas, in fact, religion as a social constituent is of secondary significance. Primarily, the religious experience is the axis around which all other experience revolves. It sets the center and describes the horizon of the human scene, and so disposes into their places all the other goods of civilization without ever being itself disposed by them. Once the whole has been so experienced, a man will be better able to consider any aspect of reality, including that aspect which is society—the grandeur and misery of man's lot.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

The Myth of the Jew

To the Editor of Commentary:

Leslie A. Fiedler's article "What Can We Do About Fagin?" presents a lucid study indeed of the basic nature of the Christian myth of the Jew in Western culture.

In describing possible lines of action, Mr. Fiedler rejects the assimilationist strategy of accepting the myth and dissociating ourselves from it; he further rejects the return via Hasidism or Talmudism to a closed Orthodox community; and finally, he rejects the Zionist solution of the normalization of the Jewish people on the soil of its own land. As his own solution, however, aside from the tentative suggestion of building rival myths to describe the Jew in a more sympathetic light, Mr. Fiedler offers only the proposal that we must wait until that millennium when the Gentile himself will realize his guilt. . . .

So far as I know, there was never a time in history when a triumphant culture admitted a basic error in its own civilization. Of course, after a culture has declined, its survivors or successors may readily point out the weaknesses of the decadent order, but by that time new powers have already risen and must be reckoned with. But more important than this basic fallacy in Mr. Fiedler's proposal is the fact that were the Jew to center his life experiences around the value of Western culture and at the same time to see himself constantly portrayed as the dark villain of this culture and to resign himself to this portrayal, he, on the one hand, would be subjected to bitter, never-ceasing frustrations, self-hatred, and feelings of inferiority, and the Gentile, on the other hand, would be comfortably confirmed in his prejudices by the Jew's very response.

I myself have accepted the Zionist thesis that the abnormality of Jewish existence as both a religious group and a people deprived of its land, is one of the basic causes of the fear and hatred of Jews, and that the normalization of the Jews as a people on its own soil and as a religious-cultural group in the Diaspora will gradually tend to overcome this hatred. However, I have not closed my mind to other convincing ideas. I was therefore deeply disappointed to find that after Mr. Fiedler's excellent study of the problem, he had so little to offer in the way of solution.

Mrs. Asher Ettinger
Executive Director
Jewish Community Center
Pottsville, Pennsylvania

To the Editor of Commentary:

Leslie A. Fiedler's "What Can We Do About Fagin?" in the May Commentary brought to mind my experience in reading *Sea Life in Nelson's Time*, by John Masefield, Poet Laureate of England, in which he reports: "The Jews . . . plied a very thriving business with the sailors at every sea-port. . . . 'Gold' watches, which ticked very loudly, and went for a week, made a very profitable line. . . . For all this trash they asked enormous prices, about five times more than the things were worth. . . . Towards the end of the long French wars the captains grew more strict in their admission of these creatures. . . . The sailors knew very well that the Jews cheated them but they had no alternative but to submit."

Mr. Masefield includes this in a book which is generally accepted as providing a most authentic picture of life in the British Navy at the height of Britain's maritime supremacy under her greatest naval hero, and which includes such indications as the following of the Navy's moral level at the time:

"If neither sugary announcements nor the offer of pieces of gold could lure men to the living death of a gun-deck [the captain] had to have recourse to the press. . . . It did not matter whether they were married men with families, tradesmen with businesses, or young men studying for professions, all was fish that came into the press-gang's net. . . . They were taken to the boats and sent aboard, and cracked across the head if they protested. . . ."

"A purser had many ways of making himself rich at the expense of the poor tar. Slops [ship's stores] were also sold to dead men and charged upon the dead men's wages. It was often said that a purser could make a dead man chew tobacco. . . ."

"Many captains had the savagery to flog the last man down [from the rigging], so that every man risked his neck to get down quickly.

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. . . Their cruelty caused the death of many poor seamen, who fell from aloft while racing up or down. . . ."

"One blow was sufficient to take off the skin and to draw blood wherever the knots fell. Six blows were enough to make the back positively raw. Twelve blows cut deeply into it and left a horrible red slough, sickening to look upon. Yet three dozen was a common punishment. Six dozen lashes were counted as nothing. Three hundred lashes were very frequently given. . . . Joshua Davis tells us of a corpse being brought alongside with the head hanging down and the bones laid bare from the neck to the waist. There were still fifty lashes due to the man, so they were given to the corpse at the captain's order."

HARRY ECKSTEIN

New York City

Psychoanalysis and Ethics

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In her review of Erich Fromm's *Man for Himself,* in the April COMMENTARY, Lillian Blumberg . . . has delved into the author's unconscious and found there a faith "that the psychiatric processes by which individuals are freed of neurosis will, in some mystical way, also result in stabilizing the social order: if the individual is happy the social order will be good." Anyone at all acquainted with Dr. Fromm's writings will find this a remarkable interpretation of his position. Miss Blumberg has given Dr. Fromm a faith he does not have, and then tries, hangs, and quarters him on the basis of this faith. . . . Thus cavalierly to distort his views is to do those interested in a better world a grave disservice.

Completely disregarding the major problem treated in the book, that of characterology, Miss Blumberg rushes to find fault with Dr. Fromm's "passionate conviction of man's inherent goodness." Though she implies greater displeasure with "an underlying contempt for man in much of contemporary psychiatric writing," she states that the inherent goodness of man has most distinctly not been proven. Let us suppose for a moment that Dr. Fromm's experience as an analyst, during which he has become increasingly impressed by the strength of the strivings for happiness and health which are part of the natural equipment of man, count for nothing with Miss Blumberg; we must ask, nevertheless, what other concept of man's nature she would propose. Paraphrasing John Dewey, we must say that democracy is truly an absurdity where faith in the individual as individual (and this means in his inherent goodness) is impossible. . . .

Attacking the problem of how we can distinguish between true and false ideals—since many people do experience *subjective* pleasure out of suffering and submission—Dr. Fromm in *Man for Himself* demonstrates how the individual with the non-productive character structure, having no faith in himself or in others, seeks security through submission to a leader or other authority—following a system of ethics which is good for the authority but not good for him, objectively speaking. Even though the individual experiences subjective pleasure from such submission or conformity, he is not really happy, as psychiatric evidence has revealed. On the other hand, the individual with the productive character structure, having faith in himself and in others, experiences real "joy" in living. . . .

Dr. Fromm, to return to Miss Blumberg's review, does not think that through psychoanalysis alone will come a world of productively oriented men and so a good social order. Indeed, in his earlier volume, *Escape from Freedom,* he specifically charges that "psychiatry . . . has made itself an instrument of the general trends in the manipulation of personality." That is why he states that psychologists must see the relevance of the moral problem in order to be helpful.

DANIEL ADELSON

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

While I agree with Mr. Adelson that man has indeed a strong urge towards health and happiness, it does not follow from this that he is *inherently* either good or evil. I sympathize with Mr. Adelson's faith that man is inherently good, but such a formulation of the problem makes it undemonstrable. We know, alas, that man is capable of abysmal evil, but also that he is capable of sublime good. The real question is under what conditions he can be expected to behave either way.

It indicates perhaps how far down the garden path psychoanalytic tradition has taken us that one's conclusion as to the *logical* implications of a writer's position can draw the accusation of having delved into his unconscious. While Dr. Fromm's "productively oriented" man supplies us with an elegant synonym for a vague enough concept—the normal personality—which he apparently feels is based on an ideal rather than a statistical norm, he has neglected to supply any of its defining characteristics. Dr. Fromm has assumed that a "productively oriented" person will *naturally* have "true" ideals and will act according to them. He has not demonstrated, however, why this should necessarily be the case.

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The fact that Mr. Adelson finds "characterology" the main problem of a book that purports to bring ethics within the framework of psychoanalysis only substantiates my thesis. Dr. Fromm's characterology is a system of classification according to neurotic types and, as such, is perhaps better than most typologies. Its inclusion in the book is mainly for the purpose of telling us what the "productively oriented" personality is *not;* we never find out quite what it *is* other than that it is man's "true self."

I repeat that Dr. Fromm did not succeed in doing in his book what he set out to do: pose the real problems involved in the relationship of psychoanalysis to ethics.

LILLIAN BLUMBERG

New York City

Marx's Legacy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Borkenau's article in the May issue on "Marx's Prophecy in the Light of History" is admirable, but it doesn't sufficiently stress the truly scientific core of Marxian socialism. Much in Marx is obsolete and all but forgotten. Dialectical materialism is excess baggage. The labor theory of value, taken by Marx from the classical economists of England, is now rejected in favor of the Jevons-Austrian theory. The proletariat, as Mr. Borkenau points out, has not played the role Marxism assigned to it. The majority of wage-workers today have more than their "chains" to lose by violent and protracted revolution. The adoption of socialism will not usher in the millennium. *No* economic system can solve all our social problems.

But all this can be discarded. What remains is the Marxian analysis and critique of capitalism and its imperialistic aspect, plus the demonstration that the profit system is "suicidal"—that capitalism digs its own grave, dies of its inherent contradictions, and is inevitably superseded by socialism, which eliminates "surplus value" and removes the danger of periodic depressions and war over markets, colonies, etc.

Nothing since Marx has shaken this analysis. Recently, a *Harper's* contributor, a professor of European reputation, after a tour of our universities, testified in a striking article to the conscious and unconscious "Marxism" of our economic thinking. The opponents of Marx are themselves at bottom Marxian. The future belongs not to free enterprise, which is already a sort of myth, but to democratic socialism—a cooperative commonwealth based on a sound, *organic* idea of society. The profit motive is obsolete. Production for use, under careful planning and direction in the interest of the whole body social, is the only answer to the problems of monopoly, economic autocracy, unemployment, and the fatal boom-bust cycle.

We owe much to Marx, after all, as Mr. Borkenau recognizes.

VICTOR S. YARROS

La Jolla, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Borkenau has made a very helpful analysis of Marx's inductions. He is correct in speaking of Marx as a prophet, and of the Marxian system as apocalyptic. . . . But I doubt that he is on solid ground in dismissing the Marxian idea of "historical materialism" with such brief treatment. Even though the philosophical foundations may not have been carefully laid by Marx, it is my belief that he did not think this necessary. He believed so thoroughly in the reality of materialism that he thought it necessary only to demonstrate its form of movement in a manner which would bring it into harmony with the scientific theory of his age. This linking of social theory with physical theory is one of Marx's greatest achievements. It is also one of the most dangerous elements in Marxism because of the stultifying influence it has had upon the social theory of our time. One might agree with Mr. Borkenau's thesis that history has not yet demonstrated Marx's general outlook, but if one retains faith in the supremacy of materialistic realities, one might still believe that the Marxian system will yet be vindicated. The physical theory aspects of Marxian thought, including its historical materialism, must be thoroughly undermined before the appeal of such a system can be destroyed. This I presume to be the objective of the article.

S. R. KAMM
Chairman

Division of Social Sciences
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

Change and Fossilization

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

An interesting, but rather illusory, interpretation of the development of the Jewish religion is given by Joseph Blau in his letter to the editor, published in the April issue, commenting on Dr. Leslau's article on the Falasha Jews. . . . No one can deny the ever pressing necessity for change in the Jewish religion to make it accord more fully with our rapidly changing environmental conditions. The problem which we must confront is the means and

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methods by which this change is to be achieved.

The traditionalist can proudly point to the continuous development of the Jewish religion throughout the era of the Talmud and the Codes up to the very last responsa of a properly qualified rabbi—and note that, whereas the phenotypical aspects of the religion may appear to have assumed a different format, the genotype or core of Judaism has remained unchanged and has preserved both itself and us throughout the confusion of two thousand years of wandering. It is the Absolute in Judaism which, because of its divine source, brooks no change on the part of self-constituted authorities. The rapid dissolution of the Reform movement is proof sufficient that attempts such as that of Rabbi Kaplan, which try to decapitate rather than enrich and enhance Judaism, are foredoomed to failure.

We need not fear the fossilization of the Jewish religion if it remains in the hands of those who have maintained it for over three thousand years; rather, let us concern ourselves lest it face extinction at the hands of those who would change it to conform with the whims and vagaries of the moment. . . .

MURRAY W. GROSS

Brooklyn, New York

Christians and Jews

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If more nominal Christians were so truly Christian as Herrymon Maurer, and if, as a result, more Jews became more appreciative of Christianity and Christians, we should be on our way toward mitigating the neuroses which keep the "Jewish problem" the traumatic complex it is. . . . Mr. Maurer shows the same spirit in his article "The Yeshiva Comes to Westchester," published in the April COMMENTARY, as he did in his earlier "Practical Scheme to Settle the DP's," and, in a different but analogous connection, in his wonderfully humanitarian book on Gandhi.

It seems to me that if COMMENTARY has a fault, it is that it is too full of Jewish writers analyzing Jewry. This may be desirable to a degree, but it can and does become neurotic. The beauty of Mr. Maurer's approach lies in his sensitivity of spirit, its strength and effectiveness in his healthy objectivity. Let us have more Christians, good ones and even bad ones, expressing themselves on the subject of Jews and Jewry; and let us have Jews expressing themselves with equal objectivity about Christians. Thus we may all purge ourselves of our neurotic distrust. Mr. Maurer is a rare asset to COMMENTARY and to humanity. Let us have more of him in the hope that others, of all faiths and all doubts, may catch his torch and, in turn, shed its light.

CORINNA MARSH

New York City

Primitive Jewish Historiography

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It was with great pleasure and interest that I read Oscar Handlin's carefully constructed and succinct article "New Paths in American Jewish History," in the April COMMENTARY. As a graduate student in American history, I found Dr. Handlin's comments on the primitive quality of American Jewish historiography extremely exhilarating. The failings he describes, however, are not particular to American Jewish historiography, but to a great extent have belonged also to respectable American history until comparatively recently. The questionings of American historians have been relegated to a very vague and nebulous "what" and "how" with only a miserly pinch of the "why," especially in the very puzzling field of social history. The "American Life" series, the pioneer work in American social history edited by Professor Schlesinger of Harvard, has fallen far short of the last-mentioned goal; however, it has provided discerning young historians with a road map and a host of mechanical aids without which any systematic research would have been extremely difficult if not impossible. There has been no comparable work in Jewish social history or, for that matter, in general Jewish history. Although this is to be regretted, it is hardly catastrophic, for although history is a highly empirical academic discipline, it has as its objective the collation rather than the collection of data. Writers of American Jewish history will benefit from the mistakes of their confreres in the more general area.

COMMENTARY is to be congratulated for the high standards it has continually maintained.

MOSES RISCHIN

Cambridge, Massachusetts

"Doctor Faustus"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I want to express to you my great appreciation of your publication of Erich Kahler's beautiful and brilliant article about *Doctor Faustus*. . . .

As always, I found the entire contents of your magazine very rich and inspiring.

THOMAS MANN

Pacific Palisades, California

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Odyssey of a Jewish Sage

A DREAMER'S JOURNEY. By MORRIS R. COHEN. Beacon Press. 318 pp. $4.00.

THE MEANING OF HUMAN HISTORY. By MORRIS R. COHEN. Open Court. 304 pp. $4.00.

STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE. By MORRIS R. COHEN. Henry Holt. 278 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by ISRAEL KNOX

MORRIS RAPHAEL COHEN did not establish his reputation as a *Jewish* philosopher, and in the body of his work there is little that is directly concerned with Jewish thought or scholarship. But in a larger sense he stands in the very midst of a great Jewish tradition. He approximated, as no other Jew in America has, the superb tradition of the *talmid chacham,* the devoted lover of *torah le-shmo,* of truth for its own sake. And with the Jewish sage this has always meant a love of truth for life's sake. If Hasidism is, in Buber's phrase, "mysticism become ethos," then the teaching of the sage of New York (like that of the Gaon of Vilna, who was a contemporary of the founder of Hasidism) is that "ethos" must be wedded to reason.

Cohen's first major work was entitled *Reason and Nature,* and another work was similarly entitled *Reason and the Social Order.* He avoided the term "experience" not at all in the sense in which philosophers from Plato to Bradley have disparaged it (identifying it derogatorily with "appearance" and excluding it from "reality"); he accepted it as the source and matrix of value but not as its standard. From this, there has emerged the erroneous impression that Cohen's philosophy was rationalistic, detached, and non-social. The little piece, a sort of epilogue to *Reason and Nature,* bearing the startling title "In Dispraise of Life, Experience, and Reality," tended to confirm this impression among those who read it literally and missed its fine irony and poignancy. It is a small matter in itself, and perhaps of no account, but in his autobiography this "stern" philosopher tells us, in almost child-like fashion, how on several occasions he was moved to tears. And why should not a philosopher who defined logic as a "study of the exhaustive possibilities of being" be moved to tears?

There is no doubt that his autobiography, *A Dreamer's Journey,* will enhance Cohen's stature. There is a quality of piety about it, and the wish to write it had been long with him. A letter to his son Felix, who had gently chided him for taking time from his philosophical studies to do the autobiography, reveals why he could not relinquish it: "I have, however, for forty years nourished the hope of writing the story of my life as an illustration of the various forces which have met or found expression in my life, especially of currents which have molded Jewish history and which are vividly illustrated in the heroic struggles of my father and mother, under diverse conditions, to earn their daily bread and to bring up their children in decency. You, and the men of your generation, seem to have no conception of the magnitude of this struggle and the immense fortitude which sustained it. I thus have a burning desire to . . . outline the basic facts of the great epic—the Odyssey, if you like—of the generation which cut its roots in the old home and crossed the ocean into a strange land without any resources other than their own unconquerable fortitude. . . ."

COHEN'S remarkable career as a teacher and philosopher is inseparable from New York, but his spiritual and intellectual roots were in Neshwies and Minsk. The greatest single influence in his life, for example, was his grandfather, who was responsible for his early education, and who, while eking out a meager livelihood as a tailor, discussed with him Aristotle, Maimonides, and similar topics. To some among us—"the men of your generation"—that may seem incredible, or, at any rate, exceptional,

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until we learn from autobiographies such as this one how ubiquitous and how pervasive learning, not merely literacy, was in the ghettos of Eastern Europe and how real to our ancestors were the values of the mind. (Even Hasidism, with its gospel of "joy" and "emotional" communion with God, did not, on the whole, descend into "evangelical revivalism.") Lucidly and without embellishment, Cohen portrays his parents and grandparents, describes his childhood, in a sense recreates an environment for us as he saw and knew it. In reading these chapters, one is reminded of the autobiography of Solomon Maimon, whose home had also been in Neshwies. But Maimon's, the product of a brilliant and yet divided mind, is not wholly honest, while Cohen's reflects a mind characterized by profound integrity.

The second half, dealing with Cohen's life in America, is, of course, more familiar to us, and interest shifts from milieu and surroundings to Cohen himself—to his boyhood here, his sudden transition "from medieval to modern times," his philosophical education, his friendship with Thomas Davidson (who was for him in America what his grandfather had been for him in Neshwies), his career as a teacher at City College, his achievements and recognition as a philosopher, and, finally, his preoccupation in later years with Jewish affairs as founder and guide of the Conference on Jewish Relations.

Here, too, there is humility, and although Cohen is the central figure he is nevertheless part of a larger setting. Much has been written in English about the Jewish East Side and its varied social and cultural life in the late 90's and the first decade of the 20th century, but little of it has the merit of insight and objectivity, and most is either maudlin or false. Cohen's sketch, brief and incomplete as it is, is unsurpassed in its sympathetic understanding of the struggles and hopes of immigrants on the new soil and in its comprehension of the forces, old and new, that helped shape their life here.

Against this background Cohen stands out as a kind of Jewish "culture hero." He represented thousands of other young men whose mothers, like his own, insisted that they would "scrub floors, if necessary, so that their children might go to college." And to college they went, and some of them came to be doctors, lawyers, teachers, authors *le-shmo,* "for the sake of truth," regarding their occupation as an intellectual enterprise, in the tradition of the *talmid chacham.* But Cohen was the *talmid chacham* as such; if you will, the consecrated *talmid chacham,* turning to contemplation without turning away from life because some men must concern themselves with "the exhaustive possibilities of all being."

COHEN'S acclaim as a teacher went beyond City College, although his students were, of course, the direct beneficiaries of his famed "Socratic method." *Studies in Science and Philosophy* contains several transcriptions of questions put to Cohen after some of his general lectures, and in the succinctness, pertinence, and acuity of his answers can be glimpsed the quality of his teaching. The "Socratic method" was used by Cohen with wisdom and to the advantage of his students, but there are others who resort to it now in ways—and out of motives—almost the opposite of Cohen's. It should be noted, however, that its uses, even in the hands of a master, can miscarry: too much emphasis may fall on the process of reasoning and too little on its content, and the method may induce in the student an unwarranted sense of intellectual assurance, despite the teacher's desire to render him less dogmatic and more circumspect; or it may, on the other hand, induce in the student with a "sympathetic" and "imaginative" type of mind, a sense of inferiority because of his apparent lack of logical skill. Little of this happened in Cohen's classes, because of his own liberal and humanistic philosophy, but much of it may happen—and probably does—in the classrooms of Cohen's "imitators."

Studies in Science and Philosophy discloses what none have disputed: Cohen's enormous erudition and his rigorous thinking in technical philosophy. It also shows his ability in presenting technical philosophical issues in language that is non-technical, readable, and, one might even add, "popular." The papers included here were written over a number of years, but few, if any, are dated, and the volume as a whole is quite unified. It contains his intellectual autobiography, "The Faith of a Logician," essays on scientific method, and a friendly but effective critique of what he calls Dewey's "anthropocentricity." It is this, Cohen believes, that led Dewey away from the enduring issues of metaphysics, from "the stellar universe"—as he writes elsewhere—"[whose] forces . . . create and destroy man, while the converse is not true."

As a piece of writing, *The Meaning of Hu-*

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man History is probably Cohen's finest book. It does not consist of separate papers, but was planned, to begin with, as a book, and, by way of preparation, was delivered as the sixth series of the Paul Carus lectures at the University of Chicago. Containing no strikingly "new" and "original" interpretation of history, and altogether too clear and sane for the fashions of the day, it will in all likelihood be overlooked. Cohen examines various hypotheses on the nature and meaning of history, discloses the untenability of that view which would restrict historical facts to a single dimension and category, and applies to history his own principle of polarity (according to which progress and degeneration, structure and contingency, necessity and freedom, and so forth, are not contradictory but complementary). He points out the need for a knowledge of the past as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the understanding of the present, and while admitting the irrationalities of history and even deploring the classical liberal's inclination to neglect or simplify them, does not reject the methods of free and critical inquiry in behalf of irrationalism and intuitionism.

THE problem in the philosophy of history would seem to stem from the need to recognize the uniqueness of historical events and then, upon such recognition, to discover some intrinsic relationship between these events and an underlying pattern or patterns. As Cohen phrases it, the historian must take up residence within the fact (which is an event in time). Now obviously history is not merely a chronicle of particulars, as Aristotle thought it (holding it therefore to be less philosophical than poetry); it has an import going beyond the particulars, and sometimes attains "universal meaning." May it not be that the "universality" of historical meanings is more like that of art than that of science (though its method of inquiry must be that of science)—a "universality" in depth, concrete and contagious, rather than in breadth, formal and abstract. In saying that the historian must take up residence within the fact, and in differentiating history from sociology, Cohen appears to suggest this without developing it, and he might have been willing to read into Hillel's famous utterance—"Do not judge your fellowman until you find yourself in his place"—the very essence of the historian's enterprise.

Many readers will be stirred by the final chapter in the book, "The Tragic View of History." It is a kind of *confessio fidei*. Indeed, Cohen is here in the company of Spinoza and Samuel Alexander, and what he is confessing is a "natural piety." No "teleology" is here imposed upon the universe, no attempt is made to construe history as a guarantee of the "triumph" of the "heart's desire," there is no explaining away of the cruelty and suffering found in history, past and present. Yet in his awareness of man's tragic predicament as a limited and finite being in a world not of his making, Cohen still proclaims him to be a rational and moral being, capable of equating his destiny, through hard and persistent effort, with his dignity as a rational and moral being.

LEGEND has it that when the Gaon of Vilna was about to die, his family and friends sent for the Maggid of Dubno to say *vidui* with him. The preacher, carried away by his eloquence, soon began to reproach the sage, not on the ground that his life was blameworthy, but because it had been an untroubled and sheltered one, and hence had exposed him to no temptations. The preacher went on to assure him that although he was entitled to a "portion of the hereafter," he was getting it at no great cost. "How would you have lived," he asked, "if you had been a plain, simple Jew, with a wife and children to support? Suppose you had been in the place of that Jew one Friday afternoon, trudging along a country road trying to sell some wares to the peasants who wanted none of them —and as the sun sank in the sky and the Sabbath approached, had gone on, violating the sanctity of the Sabbath, because you did not have the heart to return home to a sick wife and hungry children empty-handed? Oh, suppose you had been that Jew, what would *you* have done?"—And the story tells that the sage was too weak to reply but that as he died tears were rolling down his cheeks. No sheltered life is recorded in *A Dreamer's Journey*. It was the journey of one who knew hunger and want, who came to the "promised land" as a boy, and here too knew poverty, sorrow, and even despair, who never forsook his own, and was generous in his dealings with others. It was the journey of one who in the measured fulfillment of some of his hopes and by virtue of the legacy he has left behind him, stands out as a Jewish "culture-hero" in America, as an admirable representative of the tradition of the *talmid chacham*.

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Men at War

GUARD OF HONOR. By JAMES GOULD COZZENS. Harcourt, Brace. 631 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE J. BECKER

THE slice of life or the cross-section has been used by novelists to give a balanced and objective view of a world too often subject to distortion because of faulty vision or special pleading. James Gould Cozzens, in his Pulitzer Prize novel, uses the technique with skill and urbanity. Yet his very success brings the value of the device into question.

For millions of us, civilian as well as military combatants, the most abiding memory of the late war is of the gigantic and often apparently chaotic organizations of which we were a part. As sprawling army bases and posts rose in brick and concrete almost overnight, teapot tempests and departmental intrigues and jealousies loomed larger on the immediate horizon than the landing on Okinawa or the crossing of the Rhine. Conduct of the war, like that of any enterprise, depended on the nature and interplay of personalities. A fumbler in uniform was a fumbler still, raised even to a higher power.

What Mr. Cozzens gives us is the shock and pleasure of recognition. A score or more of representative people at a great army air base at Ocanara, Florida, live through forty-eight hours and 631 pages of a purely local crisis. For a time it is in question whether Major General Beal, commander of the base, will display the powers of judgment and stability to enable him in an administrative position to continue the rapid rise he has made as a "flying general." If it is less by intelligence than by his ability to inspire the intelligent devotion of others that he does come through, still there is the comforting assurance that the war is in good hands and men of good will do prosper.

It is both idle and ungrateful to ask that an author have written another novel than he did. Yet the careful lack of focus, the persistent effort to avoid an issue, the deliberate reaching out to obvious and trivial episodes in the lives of the characters, becomes here a fundamental flaw, negating the very literary skill that is everywhere apparent. This group of human beings is intrinsically no more interesting than any other similarly complex group, nor is the Ocanara air base shown to be any different in its essentials from a department store, or a labor union, or a metropolitan hospital, to choose at random from popular subjects of the cross-section technique. Indeed, except for the possible novelty of the military scene, there is nothing new here. On the evidence submitted by Mr. Cozzens, there is no reason to think that the war behind the lines is especially interesting or worth writing about.

Actually he starts a number of hares in the form of serious themes, any one of which would have provided an adequate focus for his book. In Benny Carricker and in General Beal, for example, we have tantalizing glimpses of the new man who has added the air to his dimensions. Benny, though not fully drawn, is convincing in his insouciant insubordination and pungent speech. Beal taking to the air while others resolve his problems for him is also memorable. He raises also the question of what kind of leadership a war demands, but though we are told at the end that Beal's qualities are more indispensable than those of Jo-Jo Nichols, the Jove-like Deputy Chief of Air Staff, we never get at his essence.

The crisis in Cozzens' book deals with Jim

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Crowism at the base and in the community at large. Several characters exist only to exacerbate the tension by trying to see that justice is done. A nice sense of irony is displayed in some of the central scenes. But then, as personal crises are resolved, the social problem recedes, and it becomes clear that it is only a piquant element, not the real focus of Cozzens' concern.

Thus there is both too much and too little. There is a wealth of authentic detail, but the whole is a blur, a huge Delacroix canvas that becomes a little tiresome, no matter how engaging the parts. In short, the cross-section seems played out in serious writing except as an elementary device for readers who cannot keep their eyes on a complex object. What is needed is a more intensive application of the qualities of objectivity and balanced selection to a smaller segment of experience. Where an author has found value and meaning he should make it possible for the reader to disengage them. And where they do not exist, that itself is a meaning which needs to be brought into focus.

Knox's Old Testament

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH. A NEW TRANSLATION. By RONALD KNOX. Volume one. Sheed and Ward. 739 pp. $7.00.

Reviewed by DAVID DAICHES

THIS is the first volume of Monsignor Knox's translation of the Old Testament from the Vulgate Latin, made at the request of Cardinal Hinsley and the English hierarchy. It includes the books of Genesis through Esther, though of course in the Vulgate order and not in that of the Hebrew Bible. In the Vulgate, as in most Christian Bibles, the Hebrew division into Law, Prophets, and Writings as ignored, so that, for example, the Book of Ruth comes between Judges and First Samuel (known in the Vulgate and in Knox as First Book of Kings), Ezra and Nehemiah follow Second Chronicles, and the Prophets come at the end. (In the Hebrew Bible the Prophets follow the historical books and are in turn followed by the "Writings," among which Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles are included.) This is worth mentioning, because the Jewish reader who sees a volume of the Bible marked "Genesis to Esther" might imagine that he would find in it the complete Old Testament except the last four books of the "Writings." It should also be noted that the Apocryphal books of Tobit (Tobias) and Judith are, in accordance with Catholic tradition, included in this volume.

Monsignor Knox translates from the Vulgate, the basic authorized version of the Catholic Church made by Saint Jerome in the 4th century. His version is not, however, a revision of the Douay Old Testament of 1609-10, the first authorized Catholic translation into English, which is comparable in the English Catholic tradition to the King James version in the Protestant; nor is it based on Bishop Challoner's virtually new Catholic translation of 1750. It is a wholly new rendering, original both in diction and in cadence, and is intended for the modern reader.

IT IS remarkable for any man to have achieved such a task single-handed, and it is all the more so when the result gives a completely new style to Old Testament narrative. The basic rhythms and diction of the King James version were left unchanged by the Revised Version and even by the Jewish Publication Society's translation published in 1917. Even the Douay Bible, unfamiliar though it is to ears trained on the King James version, is less unlike any of the English versions mentioned than Monsignor Knox's is to all of them. The rhythms of the original Hebrew can be perceived in some degree in the Vulgate and in most literal English translations from it; and those original rhythms are certainly found in the King James version, whose translators seem to have made some attempt to capture them; but there is no trace of them in this new version, which has a kind of fluency in narration alien alike to Hebrew and Jerome's Latin.

Take, for example, the opening of Genesis. The simple, lucid narrative of the Hebrew, with its statements linked fairly primitively by the conjunction "and," is well reproduced in the King James Bible: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

The Douay Bible, translating the Vulgate literally as the King James translates the Hebrew literally, reads: "In the beginning God created heaven, and earth. And the earth was

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void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved over the waters."

Monsignor Knox recasts the narrative into a wholly different kind of prose—less primitive, more fluent, and more diffuse: "God, at the beginning of time, created heaven and earth. Earth was still an empty waste, and darkness hung over the deep; but already, over its waters, brooded the spirit of God."

This is good, swinging prose, with a lilt to it. Nevertheless, it may not be mere prejudice which suggests that there is an almost excessive fluency here. And why say "at the beginning of time" when both the Hebrew and the Latin say simply—and effectively—"in the beginning"? Surely some of the effect is lost in adding "of time," and it might be said, too, that the meaning is changed. For the Hebrew *bereshith,* like the Latin *in principio* and the Greek *en arche,* does not limit the meaning to a temporal significance—there is almost the suggestion of "as a matter of primary importance." That overtone is lost in particularizing the temporal meaning, and there disappears, too, that immense dignity of statement that the simple phrase "in the beginning" contains.

Monsignor Knox might reply that he is making his translation for modern readers, who require a less primitive idiom, a more sophisticated tone. To which it can only be said that the tone of the Bible—either the Hebrew or the Vulgate—is not sophisticated and it is doing violence to it to render it as though it were. Further, the primitive narrative style of Genesis and other early books of the Bible has a folk quality of its own that it seems a shame to lose. Again, Monsignor Knox renders the latter part of Verse 5 thus: "So evening came, and morning, and one day passed." Both Hebrew and Vulgate say: "And there was evening, and there was morning, one day." Douay preserves this exactly: "And there was evening and morning, one day"—which is better than the rather clumsy King James rendering: "And the evening and the morning were the first day."

Monsignor Knox has a feeling for prose rhythm, but clearly the kind of prose rhythm he prefers is not that of the Old Testament—it is not, in fact, one which can be applied to Old Testament narrative without considerable padding and use of inversion. "Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord had made," says King James, and Douay is almost the same: "Now the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord God had made." Monsignor Knox, however, is not satisfied with this simple and emphatic statement. In his version it becomes: "Of all the beasts which the Lord God had made, there was none that could match the serpent in cunning." This is flowing English, but it is not what the Bible says. Paraphrase is desirable when the idiom of the original sounds strange or awkward when literally translated, but there is nothing strange or awkward in the literal King James rendering.

Sometimes Monsignor Knox's dislike of simple emphatic rhythms leads him to pad a sentence to the point of seriously weakening the meaning. "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat," answers Eve in the King James version when God asks what she had done immediately after the fatal incident in Eden. Similarly, Douay, following the Vulgate, has: "The serpent deceived me, and I did eat." (The Vulgate itself has just the primitive cogency of the Hebrew: *"Serpens decepit me, et comedi."*) But in the Knox translation the sentence reads: "The serpent, she said, beguiled me, and so I came to eat." I cannot see that the meaning is anything but weakened by breaking up the sentence this way and adding that "came to."

Sometimes this smooth flow is wholly effective, and the Song of Moses in Chapter Fifteen of Exodus goes with magnificent gusto in this new rendering. Yet even here the sophistication of style sometimes attenuates the meaning. "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name," says the King James version, literally translating the Hebrew, while Douay renders the Latin similarly: "The Lord is as a man of war; Almighty is his name." Monsignor Knox renders: "Javé, the warrior God, Javé, whose very name tells of omnipotence!" The "omnipotence" here is probably suggested by the Vulgate's "Omnipotens nomen ejus," but the Vulgate does keep the simple sense of the Hebrew *"Adonai sh'mo."* Two words in the Hebrew, three in the Latin, four in King James, and seven in Knox. This is about the ratio for the translation as a whole.

The magnificent simplicity of the narrative in the Book of Ruth is probably the best test for any translator of Old Testament narrative prose. The opening verses go as follows in

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King James: "Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; and the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelt there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab; for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread."

And here is Monsignor Knox's rendering: "In old days, Israel was ruled by Judges; and it was while one of these held sway that a man of Bethlehem-Juda took his wife and his two sons to live in the Moabite country, to escape from a famine. There, in Moab, these Ephraites from Bethlehem-Juda continued to dwell. Elimelech, and his wife Noemi, and his two sons Mahalon and Chelion; there Elimelech died, and Noemi was left a widow. But still she would be with her sons, who had now married wives of Moabite race, one called Orpha and the other Ruth. So ten years passed, and then Mahalon and Chelion both died. And now, both widowed and childless, she bade farewell to Moab and set out, with her two daughters-in-law, on the journey home; the Lord had been merciful to his people, she was told, and there was food to be had once more."

Now there are some differences between this rendering and that of King James which result simply from differences between the Vulgate and the Hebrew. (The phrase "while one of these held sway," for example, derives from the odd Vulgate rendering of *"bimei sh'phot ha-shoph'tim"* as *"in diebus unius judicis."*) And we need not be disturbed by the use of the Vulgate forms of proper names, as in "Noemi." The real difference between the two translations does not derive from differences between the Hebrew and the Vulgate—these are rarely significant, and it should be added that often when they are Monsignor Knox indicates his awareness of the difference in a footnote—but from a deliberate attempt on the present translator's part to shift the narrative into a new style. It is a more modern style, certainly, but it is not its modernity so much as its other special qualities that strike one.

It is at this point that the reader acquainted with modern English prose style catches up with the echoes that had been haunting him since he began reading the Knox version: this is precisely the style of George Moore's *Eloise and Abelard* and *The Brook Kerith*. This smoothly modulated dialogue quietly embedded in the narrative, with all trace of emphasis or rhetorical stress filed away, is uncannily reminiscent of Moore's later style. It is rash to speculate on the sources of a translator's manner, but I should guess that at some time in his career Monsignor Knox had read at least one of the late Moore novels and been fascinated by its style.

As a final example, we might take David's famous lament over Jonathan: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. . . . Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. . . ."

That is the King James version. And here is Monsignor Knox's: "Remember, Israel, the dead, wounded on thy heights, the flower of Israel, cut down on thy mountains; how fell they, warriors such as these? [The statement is in question form in the Vulgate: *"quo modo ceciderunt fortes?"*] Keep the secret in Geth, never a word in the streets of Ascalon; shall the women-folk rejoice, shall they triumph, daughters of the Philistines, the uncircumcised? . . . Saul and Jonathan, so well-beloved, so beautiful; death no more than life could part them; never was eagle so swift, never was lion so strong."

This is vigorous and eloquent, but it is not the vigor and eloquence of folk elegy; it is rather the studied plaintiveness of the late 19th- or early 20th-century stylist.

Those who, like the present reviewer, are most familiar with the rhythms of the Hebrew

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Bible and of the King James English, may be accused with some justice of coming to the present translation full of prejudices about how Biblical prose ought to sound. But after all, a translation ought to convey something of the quality of the original in its tone and style, and the fact remains that the "feel" of Monsignor Knox's prose is wholly unlike either the Hebrew or the Vulgate Latin. In presenting the Old Testament in sophisticated modern rhythms, much of the grandeur, the simple lyricism of the emotional passages, the limpid if primitive episodic quality of the best Biblical narrative, is lost. And though there are often gains, they do not altogether compensate.

We look forward to seeing Monsignor Knox's rendering of the Hebrew prophets, whose style is so different from the narrative portions of the Old Testament, and the magnificence of whose utterance provides an even sterner challenge to the translator. In the meantime, he is to be congratulated on this performance—remarkable even if it is not exactly the Bible. And one should not close a review of his translation without mentioning his real success in organizing his paragraphs. The chopping up of Biblical prose into isolated verses was a late development which, though it makes for ease of reference, obscures the literary quality of the narrative. Monsignor Knox paragraphs his prose with great effectiveness, and at the same time preserves the verse numbers by indicating them in the margin.

Survival of Humanity

FROM DAY TO DAY. By ODD NANSEN. Putnam. 485 pp. $5.00.

PSYCHOLOGIE DES LEBENS IM KONZENTRATIONSLAGER THERESIENSTADT. By EMIL UTITZ. Vienna, Sexl Verlag. 80 pp.

Reviewed by FRANZ HOELLERING

ON JANUARY 13, 1942, late in the evening, architect Odd Nansen, son of Fridtjof Nansen, was arrested by the Gestapo as a hostage. Taken from his home, his pregnant wife, and three adolescent daughters, he was thrown into Grini concentration camp near Oslo. There he remained—except for a few months spent in a camp farther north—until October 1943, when he was transferred to the notorious Sachsenhausen camp in Germany. It was not until May 1945 that Nansen became a free man again. During the whole time of his imprisonment he kept a diary that he managed to have smuggled, page by page, past SS guards to a safe place. The technical part of the writing and the preservation of the manuscript present a feat of skill, perseverance, and heroism in themselves. Reading the diary now, with the consciousness that its author survived where hundreds of thousands perished, one is often tempted to call out: "Stop it! They are coming! This line will kill you!"

The furtive notes grew into a unique document of unsurpassed value for the student of human nature and human affairs—a document that shows in minute detail the devastating effect that the application of dictatorial principles has upon modern man and his complicated society. The result of authoritarianism has been neither efficiency nor the conquest of commercial banality by idealism, but entirely the opposite: general corruption and debasement. If the oppressed suffers beyond endurance, the oppressor is degraded beyond redemption; and both turn into cruelly egotistical cynics—except for people like Odd Nansen who would rather die than live without a sense of humanity. The fact that we meet quite a number of people like him in his diary constitutes a great hope. It also provides the frightened reader with relief from the unbearable sights and insights that the author reports without self-pity. Though he simply put down what he saw, felt, and thought at any given moment during his long ordeal, he succeeded, by virtue of the person he is, in creating a work that often reads like great literature.

Too many people, even honestly concerned and searching readers, shy away from accounts of concentration camp experiences. They would be surprised at how much they could learn from this diary, at how much help it affords in the quest for a firm position in this contradictory world. In a postscript that is a deeply moving document in itself, Mr. Nansen sums up the conclusions which he has drawn from his experiences. Putting the revenge-politicians to shame, this victim of horrors that the loose talkers know only by hearsay pleads for understanding and does not hesitate to call for a "front of human kindness."

In comparison, Professor Utitz's book is a more academic but by no means abstract report.

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This scholar from Prague, pre-war author of a systematic *Characterology* and editor of the *Yearbook of Characterology,* survived three years of mental and physical abuse in the overcrowded transit-camp in Northern Bohemia where Jews from all over Europe were assembled and temporarily kept in a ghetto community before being transported to extermination camps in Poland.

A trained psychologist, Professor Utitz continued his studies of the human soul under unique laboratory conditions. Giving his findings in condensed form, he presupposes in the reader a knowledge of concentration camp conditions, and his theme is the inner life of the condemned, not the brutality of the *Herrenmensch.* Under such headings as "Character Changes," "Flight into the Past," "Dishonesty," "Courage," "Eroticism and Love," "Vanity and Delusions of Grandeur," he describes the prisoners' behavior toward one another, their methods of acclimatization, their revaluation of values. He also describes the society that came into being under the Nazi-sponsored and controlled ghetto self-government. This community reproduced in grotesque distortion all the features, good and bad, of the bourgeois society to which most of the prisoners had belonged before their arrest. However, it was also infected by the Nazi climate whose foul air its victims had to breathe.

Professor Utitz's findings, which, one hopes, will be soon available in English, contain a treasure of pertinent, though often painful, observations and interpretations. His scientific objectivity, however, makes his positive conclusions count double. Again we meet people who prove in the most adverse situations that man can control his heavy inheritance of savagery without losing his vigor. The report is beautifully written by just such a self-controlled man, who, like Odd Nansen, preserved his humanity in the depths of the Inferno.

A Lively Irreverence

THE MELODRAMATISTS. By HOWARD NEMEROV. Random House. 338 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by ISA KAPP

AT A time when the most trivial occasions seem to call forth cataclysmic pronouncements on our atrophied values, perished glories, and unusable traditions, Howard Nemerov takes the position that, in the midst of the fragmentary and the dissonant, it is possible to preserve one's identity and make a productive start. In the crisis of *The Melodramatists,* when the pillars and the rebels of society come face to face, he turns his own attention to a fugue for piano in which the polyphonic voices show "an inexorable confidence in their not quite harmonious world."

Though Nemerov's satire on a Bostonian family makes its (by now traditional) gesture of protest against the bourgeois world, most of its *esprit* and virtuosity is directed against the extreme avenues of flight and return resorted to by the residents. The Catholic Church, representing one possible bulwark against Protestant materialism and common sense, is described as being at its best subtle and worldly, at its worst furtive, and in any case helpless to solve human problems, even in its own terms. Its typical priest is seen as a kind of floorwalker of religion, fussy, efficient, and diplomatic, tempering with appropriate rhetoric the dogma of exchange (one truth for another) and refund (absolution for yielded sins).

THE elder sister in *The Melodramatists* is betrayed by her romantic hope in the spiritual discipline of the Roman Church; the younger is defeated by its opposite, a love of empiricism and investigation for its own sake. Susan's affair with a refugee psychoanalyst is portentously treated as a reenactment of the primal fall in Eden. The analyst is Satan, still tendering the original apple of sexual knowledge whose fruit corrodes the spirit and complicates the heart. A victim of professional self-hatred, Dr. Einman believes that it is his business to render the extraordinary mediocre, to amputate "another limb of humanity" (a suspicion Mary McCarthy once put much more vigorously: "Oh my God . . . preserve me in disunity"). He is also amoral; through his intimacy with pain and decay (he was a prisoner at Auschwitz and "not one feature seemed unblemished, untouched by experience, there were no blanks in the face") he has been shot onto a plane beyond morality, which is a luxury of the surface life. On the other hand, this very scientist, who uses his patients more for research than for therapy, is the reasonable advocate of Nemerov's theory of moderateness, of self-possession in the face of paradox and aberration. "Everything absolute," he points

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out, "belongs to death." But this wisdom is lost on an existentialist Satan for whom the opening up of infinite possibility ("anything can happen") is synonymous with uprooting. Nemerov, too, seems willing to place a tragic weight on the loss of innocence, and to assume that knowledge either corrupts or is futile.

FUTILITY is the real target of this satire, and that is why the book, despite the tense formal perfection that admirably exploits at all points the logic of the absurd, often appears to be charging at windmills. There is among all these romantic tragedians not enough smugness, vice, or respectability to make a battle worth while. The "emperor," in this case, is willing to testify to his own nakedness, and the "new clothes" are the sheerest hypothetical fabric of the novelist. Nevertheless, simply by going through the motions of masking and unmasking, Nemerov turns up haphazard sleazy undergarments in unexpected places.

His most Huxleyan thrust is against the Protestant patriarch who escapes from the contradictions of his breakfast table autocracy to a Nirvana of hot baths and insanity. In that retreat, ironic fate finally catches up with him, and the old violator of his family's privacy is forbidden to lock even his bathroom door against doctors and attendants. Nemerov throughout his novel makes the point that it is increasingly impossible to achieve privacy in modern society. Thus, by a sleight of hand, he scoops the blackmailing butler out of detective stories into his true place as a challenge to the privacy of his employer: the obscene intruder who makes up the beds. And in the end, no privacy remains, even for sin or death.

The melodramatists converge like puppets toward the farce of the climax. A tranquil old whore pulls the strings, bumps together the heads of science and religion, and executes a *coup d'état* in what was once a proper Bostonian home, and later a house of correction. Of course this is too shrewd, too inversely logical for an authentic novel, but it serves as a springboard for Nemerov's dialectics. Something can be said for the role of the minor novelist as critic rather than as generator. Though *The Melodramatists* is stiff and unrelaxed (it has no ebb and flow, no solid prosaic stretches of narrative) and well-guarded (it will never be caught in a simple sentence or direct commitment), it flourishes a lively irreverence in the face of our contemporary pieties.

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